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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2005

50¢

AAFES to hike gas prices up 10 cents

Germany, England, Netherlands will see increase March 1

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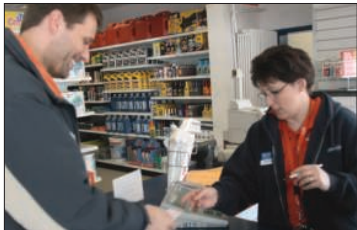


**Bush, Putin
to work on
limiting
nations with
nukes**

Leaders agree to disagree
on Russian democracy

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President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin shake hands after their news conference in Bratislava, Thursday.



Rob Morton, a civilian contractor for General Dynamics, buys \$110 in gas coupons from Genia Priest on Thursday at an AAFES gas station at Lincoln Village. Gas prices will jump 10 cents a gallon in March.

AAFES hikes up gasoline prices

By RUSS RIZZO

Stars and Stripes

Department of Defense ID card holders in Germany and four other countries would be wise to stock up on gas coupons before Tuesday.

Gas prices are going up 10 cents a gallon for unleaded fuel in Germany, England, the Netherlands, Turkey and the Azores starting March 1, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service announced this week. Diesel prices will jump almost 4 cents a gallon.

That's exactly what Rob Morton did Thursday upon hearing the news of the price increase.

Morton, a civilian contractor working in Darmstadt, Germany, planned to pay the \$28.42 for a full tank of super-unleaded gas in his Volvo station wagon and be on his way. But when he heard prices would rise next week, he bought coupons for 200 liters of gas — about \$3 gallons.

He pocketed \$5.30 in savings.

AAFES adjusts gas prices monthly based on average prices drivers stateside pay. The national average for regular unleaded

gas in the United States is \$1.897, AAA said Thursday.

Since drivers in the United States paid more to fill up their tanks last month, AAFES customers will pay more in March, according to AAFES.

The Navy controls gas prices for other European countries including Italy. No announcement has been made on whether those prices will increase, said Joe Guffreda, vice president of AAFES-Europe.

Starting Tuesday, AAFES customers buying the lowest grade of unleaded gas available will pay \$2.07 a gallon in Germany; \$2.10 a gallon in England; \$2.26 a gallon in the Netherlands; \$2.22 a gallon in Turkey; and \$2.21 a gallon in the Azores, according to AAFES.

"It's still better than buying on the economy," Morton said.

He has a point: An Aral station in Darmstadt on Thursday charged 1.14 euros a liter — the equivalent of \$5.78 a gallon — for regular unleaded gas.

That's nearly triple the \$1.97 a gallon charged at AAFES stations across the country.

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U.S. maintains nuke arsenal in Europe, group's report claims

By RON JENSEN

Stars and Stripes

RAF MILDENHALL, England — More than 15 years after the Berlin Wall crumbled and signaled the end of the Cold War, America maintains a nuclear arsenal in Europe of 480 weapons, a report from an environmental group claims.

The report from the Natural Resources Defense Council, headquartered in New York City, released this month said there is no rationale for their presence.

"It's having one foot stuck in the Cold War," said Hans Kristensen, author of "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe," during a telephone interview with Stars and Stripes.

The 100-page report said the U.S. nuclear arsenal in Europe is larger than the entire nuclear weapons stockpile of any nation except Russia. The United States is the only country that deploys such weapons outside its own boundaries.

The NRDC is a nonprofit organization created in 1970 and dedicated to protecting public health and the environment. Its 1 million members are scientists, lawyers and environmental specialists.

Kristensen based his report on declassified documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, military publications, commercial satellite imagery and other documents, according to a press release that accompanies the report.

In the interview, he mentioned another source. "People talk," he said. "People like to talk about what they do."

The report said weapons are stored at eight bases in six countries: Germany, England, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey.

Germany has more American nukes stored within its borders than any other country, Kristensen said in the report. The United States keeps as many as

150 nuclear arms at U.S. bases in Germany, he said.

There are 110 weapons stored at RAF Lakenheath, England. Bases in Italy and Turkey each store 90 weapons. Bases in Belgium and the Netherlands each store 20 nuclear weapons, according to the report.

Lt. Cmdr. Rick Haupt, a spokesman for the U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany, would not comment on the details cited in the report.

"It's been a long-standing policy that the U.S. does not comment on numbers and locations and capabilities of nuclear weapons," he said in a telephone interview with Stars and Stripes.

However, Haupt did acknowledge that maintaining a nuclear arsenal in Europe is part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's security policy. The alliance, he said, believes the nuclear forces "provide an essential political and military link between European and North American members of the alliance." He said the number will continue to be the "minimum sufficient level to preserve peace and stability."

Kristensen said, "That's like saying we have them here because we used to have them here. There have

to be real tough reasons and urgent reasons for having weapons like that anywhere."

The weapons are simple gravity bombs, Kristensen wrote in his report. In the interview, he said their removal could be quick and simple.

"They're very easily moved," he said. "You just roll them up in a C-141 and fly them wherever you want. You could move these things in an afternoon."

Kristensen said the United States did remove thousands of nuclear weapons from Europe following the Soviet Union's collapse, but left 480 behind.

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Home at last



PHOTOS BY KRISTEN CHANDLER TOTM/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Above: Overcome with excitement, Sierra Custer, 6, clings to her dad, Sgt. Wesley Custer, from the 601st Cavalry Support Detachment after his welcome home ceremony Wednesday. Ten soldiers from the detachment based out of Schweinfurt, Germany, returned from their year of duty in Iraq. Right: Carissa Joseph shows her 3-year-old daughter, Angelica, how to salute while waiting for great Spc. Jonathan Joseph from the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry. About 100 soldiers representing almost all of the 2nd Brigade units returned from a year in Iraq on Wednesday and were welcomed at a brief ceremony at Finney Fitness Center on Conn Barracks in Schweinfurt, Germany.



DODDS teacher dies from long-term illness

A Department of Defense Dependents Schools teacher with 27 years of experience educating military children died at his family home in Shawboro, Wis., last week, DODDS officials said Thursday.

Darryl A. Levin, 53, died on Feb. 18 from complications of a long-term illness, said Bonnie Bowen-Hannan, principal at Ramstein Intermediate School, where Levin taught third grade. DODDS did not release other details about the circumstances of Levin's death.

Starting in 1978, Levin taught second through sixth grades at a series of seven DODDS schools in Germany, Bowen-Hannan said.

"He was an exceptional teacher. He was adored by his students," she said. "That man was just everything you would want in a teacher."

A memorial service for Levin is scheduled from 4-6 p.m. at the Northside Chapel on Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Petty officer sentenced for ID thefts

NORFOLK, Va. — A Navy petty officer from the Baltimore area who stole the identities of nearly two dozen servicemen was sentenced to 47 months in the brig, reduced in rank and disbarred from the Navy, a military spokesman said.

Curtis Phillips, 28, was convicted of identity theft and three other charges relating to his enlistment and service during general court-martial at the Navy Trial Service Office in Norfolk, Navy officials said Wednesday.

From staff and wire reports

USMC creates training unit

Force designed to aid foreign militaries in hot spots

BY JON R. ANDERSON

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Taking a page from the Army's special forces playbook, the Marine Corps is creating a unit designed to train local militaries in hot spots around the world, according to the commandant.

"We're now in the process of standing up a training unit within the Marine Corps," Gen. Mike Hagee told a gathering of reporters Thursday in Washington.

Tentatively dubbed the Foreign Military Training Unit, the new organization will come in the wake of several training missions the Corps has taken on in recent years in far-flung locations such as Niger, Chad and the former Soviet republic of Georgia.

"It's a capability that we've had, we've just never had a unit devoted to this," said Hagee.

The FMTU will be built in partnership with the Army special forces and the joint U.S. Special Operations Training Command. Indeed, FMTU will be training one of special forces' core missions — gunfighters with intensive language training and culture savvy, capable of quickly inserting into a trouble spot to train up local forces.

"One of the things we don't have that the Green Berets have are all these language skills," said Hagee. "So, this is going to be a joint effort, especially initially when we're going to be looking for help from them on some of the language skills and some of the cultural understanding."

Hagee said the unit will be manned with about 400 Marines and will probably be based on the Quantico, Va., base of the unit to be fully operational by the end of the year.

The FMTU will fall under another new Security Cooperation Education Training Center based at Quantico, Va., according to a Marine spokesman.



Gen. Mike Hagee

Meanwhile, Hagee said he was discussing with Special Operations Command chief Army Gen. Ryan Brown the creation of a Marine Corps special operations headquarters to fit under Brown's command.

Currently, the Marine Corps is the only service to not have a "component command" under SOCOM.

"I have to be honest," said Hagee. "I don't like headquarters under headquarters. But sometimes there's a purpose for a headquarters, and that's what we're looking at right now."

Both initiatives come as the service looks to add 3,000 Marines to active rolls this year. If approved by Congress, that would bring the Corps' strength to 78,000 troops.

The manpower infusion will allow the Marines also to create two new infantry battalions and add more Light Armored Vehicle units.

Hagee said the first infantry battalion will be based at Camp Lejeune, N.C., under the II Marine Expeditionary Force by the end of the year.

Combat tour lengths

The commandant of the Marine Corps says he's open to changing the lengths of combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, but for now there are no plans to do so.

"We're obviously open to that, but all the indications that we have is that this is working really, quite well for us — it's working well for the individual Marine and it's working well for the families," Gen. Mike Hagee said Thursday.

Currently, battalions and squadrons rotate through the combat zones on seven-month tours while commanders and staffs at regimental headquarters and above deploy for year-long tours.

The Army, on the other hand, rotates nearly all of its formations through for one-year tours.

Talking to families, said Hagee, "I've actually asked them, what do you prefer? What they came back with, without hesitation is, 'Seven months. Even though we know they may go back again, that's what we prefer.'"

— Jon R. Anderson

He said it was still unclear where the second infantry battalion would go.

The biggest hurdle in standing the new units up, he said, was not finding enough Marines to fill the battalions but having adequate facilities for them to live and work.

The State Department and the Bush administration's \$80 billion supplemental funding request now being considered by Congress will build new barracks and support buildings, he said.

— Jon R. Anderson
e-mail:jonr.anderson@stripes.com



Courtesy of the 7th Army Training Command

Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya, left, commander of the Southern European Task Force (Airborne), and SETAF's top enlisted soldier, Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolava Savosa, furl SETAF's colors Wednesday in Vicenza, Italy. Kamiya and the SETAF headquarters staff are heading to Afghanistan to begin what is expected to be a yearlong deployment.

Ahead of deployment, SETAF furls its colors

BY KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — The long wait is almost over.

"It's hard to believe a year of training has come to an end and we are on the eve of deployment," Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya, commander of the Southern European Task Force (Airborne), told hundreds of Americans and Italians gathered in the base theater Wednesday.

Kamiya and the SETAF headquarters staff are heading to Afghanistan to begin what is expected to be a yearlong deployment leading U.S. peacekeeping efforts. The SETAF colors were furl Wednesday in a ceremony held indoors because of the weather.

"I've been told that Afghanistan can be a very cold, snowy country this time of year," Kamiya said. "Vicenza is such a great host city that it recently snowed here twice to prepare us for Afghanistan."

And both Kamiya and SETAF's top enlisted soldier, Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolava Savosa, say the troops are ready.

"Absolutely," said Savosa, adding that SETAF and its major subordinate unit, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, have known about the deployment for almost a year.

"The notification was so far out, we knew we could get the soldiers trained to do the mission," he said.

SETAF will take over for the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division. Kamiya said it would be the first time a nondivision-size headquarters staff has been assigned to take over a mission run by a larger unit. He and Savosa credited the U.S. Army Europe head-

quarters staff for contributing support and personnel to make it happen.

Of course, SETAF will be far from alone in country. The 1st Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division, elements from the Giebelstadt, Germany-based 12th Aviation Brigade and the Illiesheim, Germany-based 11th Aviation Regiment and other reserve and active-duty units from the States and the Pacific theater will soon be serving in Afghanistan.

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force is also in country and is expected to take a greater role in peacekeeping efforts during SETAF's year in Afghanistan. An Italian commander is scheduled to take over ISAF from a Turkish counterpart during that span.

Kamiya told Italian journalists after the ceremony that he expects to have a good relationship with the Italian commander "given the fact that we both come from the same host nation."

Advance elements from Joint Task Force-76 are already in Afghanistan and the SETAF headquarters is expected to join them shortly. Some units, both on base and elsewhere, won't actually be in country until after SETAF takes command on March 15.

Kamiya said his thoughts and emotions about the deployment probably echo that of most of his soldiers.

He cited apprehension, confidence and excitement, before addressing anxiety.

"You're trained to a razor's edge and you just want to get there and get the game going," he said.

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Pentagon seeks leeway with rules on special ops entering countries

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is promoting a global counterterrorism plan that would allow special operations forces to enter a foreign country to conduct military operations without explicit concurrence from the U.S. ambassador there, administration officials familiar with the plan said.

The plan would weaken the long-standing "chief of mission" authority under which the U.S. ambassador, as the president's top representative in a foreign country, decides when to grant entry to U.S. government personnel based on political and diplomatic considerations. The special ops missions envisioned in the plan would largely be secret, known to only a handful of officials from the foreign country, if any.

The change is included in a highly classified "executive order" — part of a strategy developed since Sept. 11, 2001, to give the U.S. Special Operations Command new flexibility to track down and destroy terrorist networks worldwide, the officials said.

The Pentagon sees the greater leeway as vital to enabling commando forces to launch operations quickly and stealthily against terrorist groups without often time-consuming interagency debate, said

administration officials familiar with the plan. In the Pentagon view, the campaign against terrorism is a war and requires similar freedom to prosecute as in Iraq, where the military chain of command coordinates closely with the U.S. Embassy but is not subject to traditional chief-of-mission authority.

The State Department and the CIA have fought the proposal, saying it would be dangerous to dilute the authority of the U.S. ambassador and CIA station chief to oversee U.S. military and intelligence activities in other countries.

Over the past two years, the State Department has repeatedly blocked Pentagon efforts to send special operations forces into countries surreptitiously, current and former administration officials said.

In one instance, U.S. commanders tried to dispatch Special Forces soldiers into Pakistan without gaining ambassadorial approval but were rebuffed by the State Department, said two sources familiar with the event. The soldiers eventually entered Pakistan with proper clearance but were ordered out again by the ambassador for what was described as reckless behavior.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has made it clear that she intends to protect the existing chief-of-mission authority.

Bad weather cited in Texas helo crash that killed 7 in November

The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — An Army helicopter crash that killed seven soldiers in November was caused by the pilots' attempt to fly under visual flight rules in poor weather conditions, an investigation has found.

Army officials announced the findings Tuesday, about a month after the investigation of the Black Hawk crash was completed and the results shared with the victims' relatives.

Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, commanding general of the 4th Infantry Division, said administrative disciplinary action has been taken against the company and battalion commander and two members of the chain of command. The company commander has been removed.

Details concerning the administrative action cannot be released, he said.

All seven soldiers aboard died Nov. 29 when their helicopter plummeted to the ground after apparently striking cables supporting a TV transmission tower near Waco.

The crash into the 1,800-foot tower's cables occurred on a foggy morning in rural McLennan County, about 20 minutes into the two-hour flight to the Red River Army Depot near Texarkana, Texas.

The tower's flashing red warning lights were not working at the time.

The victims included Brig. Gen. Charles "Ben" Allen, an assistant division commander from Lawton, Okla., and six comrades from the 4th Infantry Division who had returned home safely after serving in the Iraq war.

They were going to the Red River Army Depot to check on repairs to 225 Humvees being readied for Iraq.

Italy launches anti-mafia raids in areas near bases

Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — Italian authorities have launched a number of anti-mafia raids in the Naples area over the past few days, resulting in dozens of arrests, and weapons and property seizures.

On Monday, carabinieri military police raided buildings in Mondragone, arresting an undisclosed number of people from the La Torre camorra clan, which, according to Italian government press reports, "controls the area" around the town. Those arrested face extortion and weapons charges.

Mondragone lies along the main coastal highway between Naval Support Activity Gaeta and NSA Naples and is well-traveled by Americans.

On Wednesday, police seized 3 million euros worth of real estate and other assets from two broth-


ers associated with the Casalese camorra clan near Caserta. One brother had been jailed since 1996 and the other remains free.

Caserta lies a few miles north of the NSA Naples Grigianova housing area.

Also on Wednesday, carabinieri also made eight arrests in Boscoreale and Torre Annunziata, at the base of Mount Vesuvius.

According to the AGI news agency report, more warrants have since been issued with charges ranging from drug dealing and extortion to illegal possession of firearms.

Finally, also on Wednesday, 21 Italians and South Americans living in Naples were arrested during a multicity anti-drug operation. The operation targeted a ring that brought drugs from Colombia to Italy via Holland or Spain. Most of the drugs are believed to have been sold in the Naples and Florence areas.



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In a lawsuit filed against Department of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, labor unions for some DOD civilian employees say the department is using security issues as a way to diminish the unions' ability to advocate for workers.

ABACA PRESS/KRT

DOD under fire from workers

Unions sue Rumsfeld over Defense's labor management system

BY JANE M. VON BERGEN
Knight Ridder Newspapers

PHILADELPHIA — Ten labor unions, representing 300,000 civilian employees of the U.S. Department of Defense, filed a federal lawsuit Wednesday

against Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying Rumsfeld's department has refused to negotiate changes in its labor management system in violation of the law.

The suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, comes after months of protests by the unions over proposals for a new National Security Personnel System, which was authorized for development by Congress in November 2003.

The unions say the system, which seeks flexibility in hiring and assigning workers for security reasons, is using threats to security as a way to diminish the unions' ability to advocate for workers.

The Department of Defense's Web site said the new system is needed to replace outdated human resource practices and better support the department's "critical national security mission."

Bradley Bunn, NSPS deputy program executive officer, would not comment directly on the suit. But in a statement he said that "the proposed NSPS regulations are the product of a

collaborative effort across the Department that ... included a number of meetings with employee representatives involving extensive and fruitful discussions."

The lawsuit said the Defense Department had the right to establish changes in the department's labor relations systems, but by law, those changes would have to be done in collaboration with employees.

Instead, the suit said, "secret working groups" developed changes privately and did not provide unions with concrete proposals.

The lawsuit asks the judge to restrain the Defense Department from implementing any new labor systems until it provides drafts of proposals and enters into meaningful discussion.

Among the unions filing suit were the International Association of Firefighters, the Laborers' International Union of North America, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and the American Federation of Government Employees. Besides Rumsfeld, the unions sued Sen. Dan G. Blaise, acting director of the United States Office of Personnel Management.

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U.S. civilians working in Iraq are making big sacrifices, but most people don't know it

The sting of being overlooked

BY KIRSTEN SCHARNBURG
Chicago Tribune

ASTORIA, Ore. — Having no idea of the significance of his delivery, the FedEx driver hurriedly tossed five massive boxes containing everything Anthony Stramiello had possessed in Iraq onto his widow's front porch.

Roberta Stramiello was jolted from the living room sofa by the thuds.

"It'd better go see what's going on out there," she said apprehensively. The last time strangers had been milling about her front porch — on the evening of Dec. 21 — they had been there to tell her that her husband was dead.

It is perhaps revealing that the personal effects of Anthony Stramiello, a 61-year-old construction contractor who had been working in the Iraqi city of Mosul at the time of his death, were returned to the United States with so little ceremony on a recent February morning.

In the nearly two years since the war began in Iraq, at least 232 civilians working on U.S. military and reconstruction contracts have been killed there, many in violent but largely overlooked slayings, according to a report issued to Congress several weeks ago.

Because of difficulties in accounting for this virtual army of private contractors in Iraq — many of whom are working in supply, logistics and even combat roles integral to the military's mission — the death toll actually could be far higher.

"The number of civilian contractors who have been killed in Iraq is far greater than any other group over there other than the U.S. military itself," said Peter Singer, an expert on national security and Iraq military contracts at the Brookings Institution.

Below the radar

Yet aside from brief moments of attention, beheadings or bloody amputations caught on videotape, the public's focus rarely has been on these at-risk civilian workers.

Few Americans seem aware these contractors are dying at a rate never before seen in American military history, and the bulk of the public's support and sympathy remains directed toward the families of the more than 1,400 military personnel killed on duty in Iraq.

"Contractors' deaths are not well reported or well documented, and they don't seem to carry nearly the same weight with the public as the deaths of soldiers do," Singer said. "Their stories don't make the front pages — they barely even make Page 28 sometimes."

"[Contractors] don't come home to funerals with full military honors or flag-draped coffins or bugles playing taps. Their families don't get letters from the president," Stramiello said. "I guess I didn't feel that way personally — for me, my husband is gone either way — but I can understand how others might feel the sting of that."

The best method the U.S. Department of Labor has for tracking the number of contractors killed in Iraq is to monitor how many insurance claims are made under the Defense Base Act, a law that requires employees who work on national or international government contracts to be provided insurance, including compensation benefits in the event of their deaths. But some families may not know they are entitled to

Civilian contractors install a gunner's shield atop a Humvee from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit at an armor installation facility in Kuwait last July.

such benefits and never officially report their family member's death.

Adding to the difficulty of monitoring how many contractors die in Iraq is the fact that there is no organization keeping an official tally of the number of civilians working there. Such an accounting would be difficult because the workers come from dozens of different countries despite the fact they all are employed by companies that have been awarded U.S. military and reconstruction contracts.

In from the Cold War

Iraq's battlefield actually was shaped most pivotally by events of the previous century. After the end of the Cold War, militaries around the world began to downsize. But at the same time, the world began to change — and destabilize in some places.

Whole regions of the world were becoming so volatile that their governments were looking

to hire professionals to protect them from violent separatists. Globalization was bringing Western companies into these same unsettled parts of the world, and they too, needed security consultants and protection. And Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism were increasing to the degree that some peacekeepers and humanitarian aid groups soon found themselves in need of private guards.

What developed to fill all these needs is what Singer has dubbed "privatized military firms."

"PMFs are business providers of professional services intricately linked to warfare — in other words, the corporate evolution of the age-old practice of mercenaries," Singer, who is considered the nation's foremost expert on the topic, writes in an upcoming issue of Foreign Affairs magazine.

In 2002, as it became clear the country was headed toward war, a number of factors all but guaranteed that an unprecedented number of civilian workers would be required to pull it off, Singer said.

The war would be more politically palatable if fewer troops were deemed necessary to deploy, he argued. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki, in fact, was pressed into retirement from his job after he predicted that an invasion of Iraq would require several hundred thousand troops, not the less than 150,000 the United States eventually used.

Into the breach

When the war began in March 2003, civilian contractors filled any gap between bodies deployed and bodies needed. But outsourcing this work to private workers did not come cheaply — or without risk.

Where once a low-paid private first class might be assigned to serve food in the mess hall, now civilian contractors could de-

mand high wages to take those jobs. Where soldiers could be court-martialed for refusing to carry out an order, civilian contractors could refuse to take missions — delivering fuel or ammunition, for example — if they believed they were too dangerous.

"I think there is a significant question as to whether very heavy use of civilian contractors is cost-effective," said Scott Silliman, the executive director of the Center on Law, Ethics and National Security at Duke University.

"In addition to that, there is the loss of control. But it does accomplish the objective of allowing the personnel in uniform to be assigned to the combat-specific, trigger-pull roles instead of using them for logistics and support."

Silliman, a former Air Force judge advocate who supervised deployment of all Air Force attorneys to the 1991 Gulf War, worries even more about the legal issues that may result from the presence of civilian contractors in Iraq.

"There are two important things to consider," he said. "The vulnerability of these civilians and the accountability of these civilians. If they are hurt or killed there, what legal protections are afforded them? If they commit crimes, can they be prosecuted?" Back at the Victorian mansion she and her husband had been painstakingly rehabbing before he went to Iraq, Roberta Stramiello spends little time in the rooms the couple already had finished, instead wandering through the ones that remain torn apart. She constantly points out what still needs to be done.

"I've done everything I can in this room," she says sadly. "The rest of the work I need Tony to do."

After the FedEx driver left on that recent morning, Roberta Stramiello made her way outside to begin the painful process of unpacking her dead husband's things. The five black trunks waited on the front porch Anthony Stramiello had built.



Photos Courtesy of the U.S. Army



Kevin DaVee, Engineer and Construction Division, chips away at the rusted earth while examining oil spill contamination in Iraq's southern Rumaila oil fields. A Corps of Engineers contractor with ERST/O'Brien stands by ready to assist.

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Bomb hits Iraqi police station

Series of attacks kill 30 across Iraq, including 2 U.S. soldiers

BY SAMEER N. YACOBUD
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A man wearing a police uniform drove a car bomb into police headquarters in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit in the largest of a series of attacks on Thursday in Iraq that left a total of 30 people dead, including two U.S. soldiers.

The violence came a day after interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi announced he was forming a coalition to try to hold onto his post in the next government and block the candidate of the dominant Shiite political alliance. The U.S. command said two American soldiers were killed and two wounded in bomb attacks Thursday, one northeast of Baghdad in Qaryat, and a second near Samarra, west of Qaryat.

At least five other Iraqi police were killed in separate attacks across the insurgent-ravaged country, including another suicide car bomb assault on a police convoy in Iskandariyah, 30 miles south of the capital.

Two roadside bombs in Qaim, near the Syrian border, also killed four Iraqi National Guardsmen, Iraqi Lt. Col. Abid Ajab Al-Salmi said.

In the capital, gunmen opened fire on a bakery, killing two people and wounding a third, police said. Several blasts echoed through the city at midday, but their cause was not immediately known.

The blast in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, 80 miles north of Baghdad, occurred at one of the station's busiest times, when dozens of policemen were arriving to relieve colleagues who'd been working all night, po-

lice Col. Saad Daham said. The attack killed 15 police and wounded nearly two dozen others.

"He waited until the shift change, then he exploded the car," Daham said of the attacker, adding the aim was "to kill as many as possible."

Daham said the bomber was able to slip into the station undetected because he was wearing a police lieutenant's uniform. He blamed guards at the station's gates for allowing the assailant to enter without checking his papers or searching his vehicle.

Twenty cars were set ablaze after the massive blast, sending clouds of smoke into the sky. An Associated Press photographer on the scene saw at least 10 charred bodies laying on the ground, which was splattered with pools of blood and bits of human flesh.

Several ambulances raced to the blast site, ferrying casualties to a local hospital. U.S. troops sealed off the area and set up checkpoints and searched vehicles across the city.

Elsewhere, insurgents ambushed a police patrol in the northern city of Kirkuk with a roadside bomb, killing two policemen and injuring three.

In Iskandariyah, a suicide bomber blew himself up in front of an office that serves as the local headquarters of the Shiite Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, killing five people, including three police officers and a child who was walking down the road at the time, the government said.

Police initially said the attack targeted the town's police chief, Col. Salman Ali, who escaped unharmed.



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U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2005, at least 1,484 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,126 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is eight higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Wednesday.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

- A soldier died Wednesday when an explosive detonated near Tuz, Iraq, north of Baghdad.

- A Marine died Tuesday in a

vehicle accident in Anbar province, Iraq.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

- Marine Lance Cpl. Trevor D. Aston, 32, Austin, Texas; died Tuesday after a vehicle accident in Anbar province, Iraq, assigned to Marine Forces Reserve 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, Austin, Texas.

- Killed Monday when an explosive detonated near their convoy in Baghdad; assigned to the Minnesota National Guard, 1st Battalion, 151st Field Artillery, Montevideo, Minn.

- Army 1st Lt. Jason Timmerman, 24, Tracy, Minn.

- Army Staff Sgt. David Day, 25, St. Louis Park, Minn.

- Army Sgt. Jesse Lhotka, 24, Alexandria, Minn.

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Army overhauling its operations at detention centers

BY JOSH WHITE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Army has initiated extensive changes in the way it trains for and conducts its worldwide detention operations, acknowledging that a series of investigations into prisoner abuses in Iraq, Afghanistan and Cuba revealed failures, omissions or confusion in Army doctrine and training that might have contributed to the abuses.

Major Gen. Donald Ryder, the Army's provost marshal general and head of the Army's criminal investigation command, said Wednesday that the wide-ranging abuse investigations launched after the Abu Ghraib prison scandal prompted the Army to rework its detention operations, specifically in training soldiers about their roles in prisons and rewriting doctrine to clarify what they are permitted to do in their jobs.

Some of the investigations released over the past year pointed to confusion between military police and military intelligence soldiers and a lack of clarity about allowable interrogation techniques. Ryder's description Wednesday of an overhaul in training and doctrine contrasted with early Army investigations, which ruled out doctrinal or systemic problems as the root causes of the abuse.

The Army's inspector general, who issued his report on the abuses to Congress in July, called the abuses at Abu Ghraib "aberra-

tions" and wrote that they should be blamed on "the failure of individuals to follow known standards of discipline and Army values and, in some cases, the failure of a few leaders to enforce those standards of discipline."

Ryder told reporters at the Pentagon on Wednesday that the Army has since altered its interrogation policies and techniques, developed a new training program for correctional soldiers, and revised two doctrine manuals and created six new doctrine manuals that relate to detention operations. He said the Army also is planning to add 35 specialized correctional units over the next three years.

"The Army has taken action," Ryder said. "This is an ongoing learning process."

Specifically, he said, soldiers who have been criminally implicated in abuses were low-ranking military police soldiers who said they had little or no training in correctional operations. Some also said they were approached by military intelligence officials to help in interrogation efforts that employed tactics that are considered torture by international standards, including the use of military working dogs.

Ryder also said the Army has retooled its interrogations manual to clarify which tactics are approved and to define the "left and right boundaries," so less is left up to an interrogator's discretion and so the tactics comply with the Geneva Conventions.



U.S. Army Military Police escort a detainee to his cell in January 2002 at Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where detainees from the war on terror have been kept since shortly after the invasion of Afghanistan. Abuse investigations at U.S. military prisons have prompted the Army to rework its detention operations at U.S. prisons worldwide, specifically in training soldiers about their roles.

COURTESY OF THE U.S. NAVY AP

The Army has reworked training operations, and is rewriting doctrine to clarify what is permitted.

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Guardman opts out of Iraq after brother slain

The Associated Press

HONOLULU — The mother of a soldier killed in Iraq said she was relieved her other son decided not to join his recently deployed Hawaii National Guard unit in Iraq.

Nakoa Hoe, a member of the 100th Battalion, 29th Brigade, was allowed to seek a waiver from combat duty since he was the sole surviving son of Allen and Adele Hoe.

The couple was at Honolulu Hale (city hall) on Wednesday as the City Council paid tribute to their son, Army 1st Lt. Nainoa Hoe, and more than two dozen Kaneohe Marines killed in Iraq.

"We're very much appreciative

of the incredible outpouring of aloha and love which this community has bestowed upon our family in honor of our son, and we're deeply grateful," Allen Hoe said.

"My only wish is that we do more to honor our troops when they are alive," Adele Hoe said. "I'm saddened that my son never lived to see how much of the outpouring of love by anyone. And I'd like to say let's do more for our troops to honor them when they're here."

Nainoa Hoe, 27, was killed by a sniper in Mosul on Jan. 22 while leading his platoon. He was a graduate of Kaneohe High School and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Hawaii College of Business Administration.

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IN THE WORLD

Bush, Putin agree to limit nuclear countries

Leaders have sometimes-prickly exchange on Russian democracy

BY TOM RAUM
The Associated Press

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia — President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed Thursday on new efforts to keep nuclear arms out of dangerous hands, but their sharp differences over Russian backsliding on democracy spilled into an open and sometimes-prickly exchange.

Seeking common ground with a former Cold War enemy that is now a key anti-terror partner, Bush said the two leaders stressed agreements over differences.

Standing side by side, their answers to questions about U.S. concerns that Putin is moving to solidify central power and quash dissent showed the sensitivity of the topic.

"It's very important that all nations understand the great values inherent in democracy — rule of law and protection of minorities, viable political debate," Bush said. "And when I brought that as Vladimir can speak for himself on this

issue. All I can tell you is he said, 'Yes meant yes when we talked about values that we share.'"

"Russia has made its choice in favor of democracy," Putin said. "This is our final choice and there is no way back, there can be no return to what we used to have."

Putin added: "We are not going to make up, to invent any kind of special Russian democracy. We are going to commit to the fundamental principles that have been established in the world."

Despite those assurances, Putin had criticism for aspects of the U.S. system. And he suggested that Russians who oppose his actions can sway public opinion because they "are richer than those who are in favor."

"We often do not pay attention to that," he said.

He also compared his move to end direct popular election of regional governors to the American Electoral College process of electing presidents.

"It's not considered undemocratic, is it?" Putin said.

As the leaders met for two hours at a medieval castle overlooking the snow-covered capital and the Danube River, aides inked an agreement designed to counter conventional and nuclear terrorism, in part by restricting the availability of shoulder-fired missiles capable of bringing down aircraft.

"We agreed to accelerate our work to protect nuclear weapons and materials both in our two nations and around the world," Bush said.

Bush said they were in union on the importance of stopping suspected nuclear weapons programs in North Korea and Iran. Putin did not address the topic. "We agreed that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon. I appreciate Vladimir's understanding on that," Bush said. "We agreed that North Korea should not have a nuclear weapon."

The visit to Slovakia was the final leg on Bush's five-day tour to heal the transatlantic rift caused by his March 2003 decision to invade Iraq without broad international support. He visited Belgium and Germany before coming here, and met with European leaders at NATO and European Union meetings in Brussels.



AP

President Bush, left, and Russian President Vladimir Putin shake hands Thursday in Bratislava, Slovakia, after a press conference where Bush said they were in union on the importance of stopping suspected nuclear weapons programs in North Korea and Iran.

Serb general surrenders

BELGRADE, Serbia-Montenegro — A senior Bosnian Serb general indicted for his alleged role in a massacre of thousands of Muslims during the Bosnian war surrendered to the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague on Thursday.

Retired Gen. Milan Gvero, who was a close aide to wartime Bosnian Serb commander Gen. Ratko Mladic, is a top war crimes fugitive. He was taken to a cell at the U.N. detention unit in the Netherlands, the tribunal said. Gvero is charged with the forcible expulsion and murder of Muslims during an onslaught by Bosnian Serb forces on Srebrenica in 1995 when more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys were executed.

Syria to pull out of Lebanon

DAMASCUS, Syria — Syria will withdraw troops from mountain and coastal areas in Lebanon in line with a 1989 agreement, Lebanon's defense minister said Thursday amid international pressure following the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Lebanese and Syrian military officers have begun meetings to define "the dates and the way" the withdrawal will take place, Murrat said, adding that the pullback was in line with the Arab-brokered ceasefire that ended Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

Arrests called effective

MANILA, Philippines — Police said Thursday they thwarted planned attacks on an airport, malls, a church and U.S. troops with the arrests of three members of an al-Qaida-linked terror group who allegedly came to the Philippines to train Muslim militants to make bombs.

The two Indonesians and a Malaysian — all alleged Jemaah Islamiyah members — were arrested in southern Zamboanga city in December along with a Filipino member of the Abu

Sayyaf Muslim extremist group with bomb-making manuals, bomb parts and money for attacks, officials said.

Terror risk high in London

LONDON — The head of London's Metropolitan Police force on Thursday warned about the risks of a terrorist attack in Britain with a royal wedding and a national election expected this year.

Sir Ian Blair said it would be "unwise" to speculate about whether he had specific information on the risk of an attack in the run-up to the general elections, widely expected in early May.

This year, Britain also will hold the presidency of the G8 group of the world's wealthy nations and the presidency of the European Union.

Terror lairs destroyed

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — President Gen. Pervez Musharraf said Thursday that Pakistani forces have destroyed al-Qaida-linked militants' sanctuaries and communication systems along the Afghan border, but still have no clue as to Osama bin Laden's whereabouts.

Musharraf told reporters that Pakistan — a key ally in the U.S.-led war on terrorism since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States — had captured 700 terror suspects in cities, and "eliminated" hundreds of them in tribal regions on the border.

Afghan elections face delay

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan's parliamentary elections face delay after the government failed to resolve issues including the voting system for its first post-Taliban legislature ahead of a key deadline, the United Nations said Thursday.

The vote was slated for the Afghan month of Sa'ur, which ends on May 21. The exact election date must be declared at least 90 days in advance — meaning the deadline passed at the end of last week.

From wire reports



AP

Women kneel in prayer Thursday at the Polish St. Stanislaw Church in Rome. Roman Catholics around the world stopped Thursday to pray for Pope John Paul II as word spread that the pontiff had been rushed to the hospital with the flu for the second time in a month.

Pope prepped for tracheotomy

The Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Doctors were preparing to operate on Pope John Paul II on Thursday to help ease his breathing problems, an Italian news agency said.

The news agencies ANSA and Apcom said doctors would perform a tracheotomy — a procedure in which a hole is made in the throat and a tube is inserted to assist breathing. The pope already was in the operating room, according to Apcom.

The reports came hours after the 84-year-old pope was rushed to the hospital in an ambulance for the second time in a month after suffering fever and congestion from a recurrence of the flu. A Vatican spokesman refused comment on the reports.

The pontiff had the same symptoms of the breathing crisis and a flu-like illness that sent him to Gemelli Polyclinic on Feb. 1, a Vatican

official said. On Wednesday, the pope made his longest public appearance since being discharged from the clinic two weeks ago.

Papal spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said earlier Thursday that the pope was taken to the Rome hospital for "necessary specialized assistance and further tests." He was taken by ambulance at 10:45 a.m., officials said.

But aides said the pope had a fever, congestion and had suffered a recurrence of breathing problems.

Medical experts who have not examined the pope but are familiar with elderly Parkinson's patients say his symptoms appeared to be consistent with pneumonia.

"It appears the pope is suffering from pneumonia, likely a bacterial pneumonia, a serious problem for a man of his age with Parkinson's," said Dr. Barbara Paris, chairwoman of geriatrics at Maimonides Medical Center in New York.

IN THE STATES

Pentagon under fire from workers

Unions sue Rumsfeld over Defense's labor management system

Knight Ridder Newspapers

PHILADELPHIA — Ten labor unions, representing 300,000 civilian employees of the U.S. Department of Defense, filed a federal lawsuit Wednesday against Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying Rumsfeld's department has refused to negotiate changes in its labor management system in violation of the law.

The suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, comes after months of protests by the unions over proposals for a new National Security Personnel System, which was authorized for development by Congress in November 2003.

The unions say the system, which seeks flexibility in hiring and assigning workers for security reasons, is using threats to secu-

rity as a way to diminish the unions' ability to advocate for workers.

The Department of Defense's Web site said the new system is needed to replace "moderated human resource practices and better support the department's 'critical national security mission.'"

Bradley Bunn, NSPS deputy program executive officer, would not comment directly on the suit. But in a statement he said that "the proposed NSPS regulations are the product of a collaborative effort across the Department that ... included a number of meetings with employee representatives involving extensive and fruitful discussions."

The lawsuit said the Defense Department had the right to establish changes in the department's labor relations systems, but by law, those changes would have to be done in collaboration with employees.

Instead, the suit said, "secret working groups" developed changes privately and did not provide unions with concrete proposals.

The lawsuit asks the judge to restrain the Defense Department from implementing any new labor systems until it provides drafts of proposals and enters into meaningful discussion.

Among the unions filing suit were the International Association of Firefighters, the Laborers' International Union of North America, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and the American Federation of Government Employees. Besides Rumsfeld, the unions sued Dan G. Blair, acting director of the United States Office of Personnel Management.



ABACA PRESS/KRT

In a lawsuit filed against Department of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, labor unions for some DOD civilian employees say the department is using security issues as a way to diminish the unions' ability to advocate for workers.

Harsh winter soaks sunny image of California

By BEN FOX

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Looking to escape the gloomy Northwest, Denise Nienaber and her family flew to Southern California to visit Disneyland and enjoy some sunny weather.

They should have stayed home. The family arrived from Seattle amid a storm of historic proportions that eventually forced them to abandon the resort — despite a rare chance to wait just five minutes to see the Haunted House.

"We didn't even consider the weather, thinking it would be beautiful," Nienaber, 38, said. "We got totally soaked."

Nienaber, her husband and two daughters retreated to their motel to watch television and consider alternatives — something that has become necessary for tourists and locals alike as Southern California wades through the wettest winter in a century.

The rainfall has totaled about 34 inches in



downtown Los Angeles since July 1, when California began recording its yearly rainfall.

It's been far more than Seattle or Portland in the same period.

The wet weather has flooded freeways,

A groundskeeper mows a green at the flooded

Morgan Run golf course along the San Diego River in North San Diego county Tuesday. The famed California lifestyle has taken a big hit due to the storm that has left the state drenched.

AP

sent houses skidding down hillsides and littered beaches with mountains of trash and tree limbs as storm runoff made its way to the ocean.

It's quite an adjustment in a place known for eternal sunshine.

People dodge puddles and scattered palm fronds in the streets, actually drive more slowly on the freeways, and even talk about the weather in a region that usually doesn't have any such discussing.

The famed Southern California lifestyle has taken a big hit: Surfers have been advised to avoid the runoff-contaminated waves; puddles spread across muddy tennis courts; and golfers trudge across muddy fairways.

Even so, some residents are undeterred. Die-hard surfers were intent on riding storm-driven swells.

"The water's brown, but you'll see a lot of surfers out there," said Matt Medina, a native San Diegoan and manager of a surf shop. "It's a risk you take, and if you get sick, you get sick."

Golfer Jack Milliken, 47, a human resources executive from Irvine, also pressed on.

"It's definitely annoying — but you gotta play golf," he said. "Not playing is not an option."

Former congressman's conviction upheld

PIERRE, S.D. — The state's highest court on Thursday upheld Bill Janklow's conviction for a 2003 crash that killed a motorcyclist, rejecting the former congressman's argument that there wasn't enough evidence for a guilty verdict. Ruling unanimously, the South Dakota Supreme Court also found that Janklow had received a fair trial.

Janklow, 65, was convicted of second-degree manslaughter and reckless driving for killing 55-year-old motorcyclist Randy Scott in August 2003 on a rural highway near Trent. Authorities said Janklow sped through a stop sign. Janklow said he was in a diabetic stupor and remembers nothing about the crash.

Janklow resigned from the House in January 2004. He completed a 100-day jail sentence but had hoped to use the appeal to clear the felony from his record.

Court rules sperm use was not theft

CHICAGO — An appeals court said a man can press a claim for emotional distress after learning a former lover had used his sperm to have a baby. But he can't claim theft, the ruling said, because the sperm were hers to keep.

The ruling Wednesday by the Illinois Appellate Court sends Dr. Richard O. Phillips' distress case back to trial court.

Phillips accuses Dr. Sharon Irons of a "calculated, profound personal betrayal" after their affair six years ago, saying she secretly kept semen after they had oral sex, then used it to get pregnant.

He said he didn't find out about the child for nearly two years, when Irons filed a paternity lawsuit. DNA tests confirmed Phillips was the father, the court papers state.

From The Associated Press

Former terrorists seek legitimacy

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — One-time members of a terrorist organization are hiding in the United States — in plain sight.

The organization's former U.S. representative freely walks the streets and has a contract with Fox News as a foreign affairs analyst. Lawmakers write letters on the group's behalf. And former intelligence officials say the group maintains contacts in defense circles, although the Pentagon denies it.

A cult to some and freedom fighters to others, the National Council of Resistance of Iran and its affiliate groups typify the gray areas in the often black-and-white world of the war on terror.

While they've been designated foreign terrorist organizations by the State Department, the groups' members still maneuver between the restrictions aimed at disabling them.

The former U.S. representative for the council, Alireza Jafarzadeh, says the U.S. government listed his organization as terrorists to appease moderate elements within the Iranian

"I see increasingly more voices being raised against this [terrorist] designation ..."

Alireza Jafarzadeh, National Council of Resistance of Iran

government. He's hoping the Bush administration will lift the terrorist designation.

"I see increasingly more voices being raised against this designation in different parts within the administration and outside the administration," said Jafarzadeh, who notes that his group no longer exists in the United States but his free-speech rights allow him to discuss policies it once advocated.

"The more serious people get about Iran, the more they are against the designation," he said.

The mission of the National Council and its military wing — the Mujahedin-e-Khalq or MEK — is to overthrow the Iranian regime, an aim increasingly in line with the Bush administration. Yet the administration has stopped short of calling for regime change.

In last month's State of the Union speech, President Bush called Iran

"the world's primary state sponsor of terror." In Europe this week, he maintained the pressure, calling suggestions that the United States is preparing to attack Iran "simply ridiculous," but quickly adding, "all options are on the table."

Yet the MEK is far from a U.S. ally. As soon as the State Department created a list of terror organizations in 1997, it named the MEK. By 1999, the department designated the MEK's political arm, the National Council of Resistance, and related affiliates. The State Department says the MEK groups were funded by Saddam Hussein.

A State Department official said U.S. policy toward the MEK and its affiliates has not changed. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the group is still considered a threat because of its history of launching terrorist attacks.

Writer goes gonzo with last request

Thompson's ashes may be shot out of a cannon

The Associated Press

DENVER — Hunter S. Thompson, the "gonzo journalist" with a penchant for drugs, guns and flame-thrower prose, might have one more salvo in store for everyone: Friends and relatives want to blast his ashes out of a cannon, just as he wished. "If that's what he wanted, we'll see if we can pull it off," said historian Douglas Brinkley, a friend of Thompson's and now the family's spokesman.

Thompson, who fatally shot himself at his Aspen-area home Sunday at 67, said several times he wanted an artillery send-off for his remains.

"There's no question, I'm sure that's what he would want," said Mike Cleverly, a longtime friend and neighbor. "Hunter truly lived that kind of thing."

Colorado fireworks impresario Marc Williams said it's doable.

"Oh, sweet. I'd love to. I would so love to," said Williams, 44, owner of Night Muck Inc. in suburban Denver and a fan of Thompson's writing.

Thompson's wife, Anita, and son, Juan, are looking into the cannon scenario, said Brinkley, who has edited some of Thompson's work.

In comments published Thursday, members of Thompson's family said the writer discussed committing suicide at least 10 years before he took his life.



Hunter S. Thompson was out there to the end — his final wishes include having his ashes blasted out of a cannon. Fireworks impresario Marc Williams, right, and employee Thomas Majors, posing with fireworks, want the job. Williams says he'd shoot the ashes 800 feet into the sky, then have a window-rattling second blast scatter them amid a massive bloom of color. Majors would construct the ash container.

"I've known for many, many years that this is how Hunter would go," Juan Thompson told the Rocky Mountain News in Thursday's editions. "It was just a question of when. This was a big surprise and I didn't expect it to be now, but the means was exactly as we expected."

Brinkley also said Thompson did not take his life "in a moment of haste or anger or despondency" but probably planned his suicide well in advance because of declining health. The author of books including "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" was in pain from a host of problems that included a broken leg and a hip replacement.

"I think he made a conscious decision that he had an incredible run of 67 years,

lived the way he wanted to, and wasn't going to suffer the indignities of old age," Brinkley said. "He was not going to let anybody dictate how he was going to die."

Thompson had spent an intimate week-end with his son, daughter-in-law and young grandson, the spokesman said.

"He was trying to really bond and be close to the family" before his suicide, Brinkley said. "This was not just an act of irrationality. It was a very pre-planned act." If the Thompson job were his, Williams said, he would probably blast the ashes from a 12-inch diameter mortar 800 feet into the sky. Then a second, window-rattling blast would scatter them amid a blossom of color 600 feet across.

Author says he regrets release of Bush tapes

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An old friend of President Bush who secretly recorded their private conversations and released them to the media said he has regrets and is turning the tapes over to Bush.

Doug Wead allowed journalists to hear and broadcast the tapes in the past week as he promoted his new book on presidential pangs.

But he said he canceled plans to be on "Hardball" on MSNBC Tuesday night because "it would only add to the distraction I have caused to the president's important and historic work."

"I'm sorry to a statement that I made to the New York Times. I have come to realize that personal relationships are more important than history," Wead wrote in a letter to the show's host, Chris Matthews, that MSNBC released to the public Wednesday.

"I am asking my attorney to direct any future proceedings from the book to charity and to find the best way to vet these tapes and get them back to the president to whom they belong. History can wait."

On the tapes, recorded over the course of the two years before Bush became the Republican presidential nominee, Bush discusses strategy for his presidential run and appears to acknowledge past drug use. He says he will refuse to answer questions about using LSD, cocaine and marijuana because "I don't want any kid who I tried to do 30 years ago."

The White House said Bush did not dispute the content of the tapes. The president's aides brushed off repeated questions about the tapes by saying Bush considered them casual conversations "with someone he thought was a friend."

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More blacks, Latinos jailed in Texas

AUSTIN — More than 70 percent of inmates in Texas prisons are black or Latino, nearly doubling their percentage of the general population, according to a report released Thursday.

The report by the Washington, D.C.-based Justice Policy Institute found that blacks are sent to prison at a rate five times higher than whites in Texas. Latinos were incarcerated at twice the rate of whites, the report said.

State and House and Senate leaders are considering expanding probation and drug treatment programs this legislative session as a way to curb the state's rising prison population.

Georgia father stabs kids, kills himself

COLUMBUS, Ga. — A father fatally stabbed his two young children and seriously wounded three others with a hunting knife before committing suicide by slitting his own throat, police said.

The father, Clarence Lacey Moore, 24, and the five children were found in a home in south Columbus after Wednesday's attack, police said. Beverly Moore, the mother of all five children, was not injured, said police Maj. Russell Traino. It was not immediately clear whether the three wounded children were related to Clarence Moore.

Pennsylvania trooper fatally shoots himself

LANCASTER, Pa. — A veteran state trooper fatally shot himself Wednesday, four days after authorities searched his home for items "related to child pornography," a state police official said.

Trooper Arthur J. Mizzi, 49, was found dead in his pickup truck in the parking lot outside his barracks in Ephrata, about 60 miles northwest of Philadelphia.

Hunter fined \$18 million for Calif. fire

EDDING, Calif. — A lost hunter who started a forest fire in northern California while trying to keep warm was ordered to pay \$18.2 million restitution. The fire in the Mendocino National Forest burned 6,058 acres and cost \$33 million to suppress, authorities said. The restitution covers the U.S. Forest Service's cost of fighting the fire and restoring the burned area, prosecutors said.

Jason Hoskey, 26, of Willows, lit a campfire when he got lost hunting on Sept. 27, 2003. The fire spread after he fell asleep.

From wire reports

OPINION

Sharon goes against grain for greater good

By DEREK CHARLES CATSAM

History News Service

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the arch-conservative old warrior from the Likud Party, has undertaken something that no one would have thought possible: He has been engaging in serious negotiations with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

It was Sharon's visit to the al-Aqsa mosque as opposition leader in September 2000 that precipitated the Palestinian declaration of intifada that has raged for more than four years. That Sharon is now at the center of not only quelling that storm but of working toward an agreement with the Palestinian Authority seems like the ultimate historical irony. But we shouldn't be surprised. History provides some precedent for this apparent transformation.

Sharon is working toward complete Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip, including the removal of Israeli settlers. For most observers of the crisis in the Middle East, Sharon would have been the last person they expect-

to challenge the settlers, make nice with the Palestinian Authority and take serious steps toward a long-term peace that would eventually result in a Palestinian state. There's still a long way to go, but we should have predicted Sharon to make it even this far.

Two historical comparisons spring to mind when one considers the path that Sharon unexpectedly walks today: The first is President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952, who ended the Cold War in 1952. The other? South African President F.W. de Klerk's freeing of Nelson Mandela and his subsequent negotiations leading to the end of apartheid in the early 1990s. The two men engaged in historical transformations at key moments, and they did so in

ways that their constituencies never would have envisioned when they rose to office. Sharon seems to be following their example.

Consider this: All three heads of state—Nixon, de Klerk and Sharon—came from the conservative wings of their countries' most prominent conservative parties. Their opponents inevitably painted them as reactionaries. Nixon was the Cold War hatchet man who had enabled the worst excesses of McCarthyism. De Klerk came from a National Party apparatus that had cracked down on anti-apartheid resistance in the 1980s. When he came to power he was perceived as being to the right of his predecessor, P.W. Botha. Sharon represented the Israeli settler community better than any politician in recent memory.

Yet despite their reputations, they engaged in liberal change that other leaders could not have accomplished. It's almost a cliché that "only Nixon could have gone to China." What this means is that had a liberal Democrat, say George McGovern, announced that he intended to do so, his opponents would have painted him as being soft on communism and worse. Because Nixon's anti-communist credentials were impeccable, he could engage with the Chinese (and pursue the subsequent détente with the Soviets) without such fears. His record as an ardent Cold Warrior prevented anyone's impugning his motives.

Similarly, only a staunch member of South Africa's National Party, the party that had implemented and perfected apartheid, could have engaged with Nelson Mandela and lifted the ban on the African National Congress and other opposition organizations. De Klerk's standing as leader of a right-wing establishment was essential to



effecting the transition from apartheid to nonracial democracy. The Nationalists would have swallowed up a more moderate man.

All of which brings us back to Ariel Sharon. We can see hints of Nixon and de Klerk in the Likud prime minister. Sharon came from his party's conservative wing, much as did de Klerk. He had a history of active support for Israel's settler communities in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

In the eyes of not only many liberal Israelis, but of the rest of the world, Sharon was retrograde, even less likely to withdraw settlers from Gaza, negotiate with the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization for a two-state solution and ally with the Labor Party in the face of conservative Likud opposition than Nixon was to travel to China or de Klerk was to seek rapprochement with Mandela.

Perhaps, then, history can teach us a lesson as we watch events unfold in the Middle East. Sometimes, having earned political capital within their own factions, savvy politicians are capable of using that capital to create space to operate in ways both unanticipated and seemingly against the grain.

Many are suspicious of Sharon because he was, in their minds, the last person likely to bring about peace and promote a two-state solution in the lands between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

It may end up being less ironic than people think if he instead becomes the only man capable of doing so. Given the precedents of Nixon and de Klerk, we have here not an irony but the grasping of a historic opportunity.

Derek Charles Catsam is an assistant professor of history at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin in Odessa.

Congress must help clear the fog on interrogations

By LINDSEY GRAHAM
AND JANE HARMAN

Shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, President Bush concluded that al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations would not be entitled to protections provided by the Geneva Conventions at the same time, however, he rightly emphasized that the policy of our government would be humane treatment for all those who fall into U.S. hands.

We strongly believe it is imperative to have a coherent, flexible and aggressive set of interrogation procedures, allowing our nation to acquire timely and valuable intelligence. This must be done, however, without forfeiting the moral authority that is inherent to our nation and essential to winning the global war on terrorism.

Unfortunately, some made early efforts to limit the definition of torture to acts "causing pain that is consistent with death or organ failure." This, in combination with the inconsistent interpretation of other pertinent laws, started us off on the wrong track. It has also left our military personnel subject to prosecution and reprimand from their respective branches of service.

It is clear to us that the events at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, as well as the allegations of abuse at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, must be thoroughly addressed, and reforms enacted. Any attempt to "play cute" with international, domestic or military laws inevitably puts our own troops at risk, leaving our armed ser-

vices personnel vulnerable to the same type of treatment if captured. It has been proved that torture or other inhuman conduct as a technique of information-gathering is flawed and often produces unreliable information.

We believe it's time for a comprehensive review of our interrogation techniques. In addition, we must provide better legal guidance to those responsible for interrogations, possibly through the enactment of a new federal law. We envision such a law as requiring a collaborative effort between Congress and the departments of Defense

and Justice in establishing procedures for the use of coercive interrogation techniques. This would help to ensure that we gather needed information without giving America a black eye.

Interrogations constitute a vital tool in eliciting intelligence in the war on terrorism. Unfortunately, the gaps in our laws have left our interrogators without clear guidelines on how to elicit that vital intelligence.

At the end of the day, this war will not be won by military action alone. The recent democratic elections in Iraq, combined with the successful elections in Afghani-

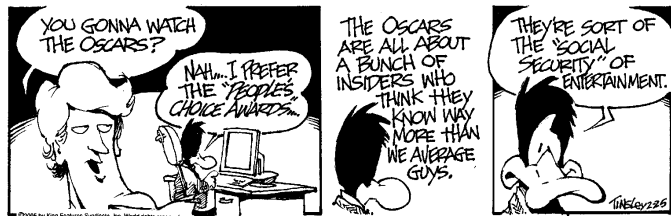
stan, signal historic changes in the region. We must empower moderate forces that are willing to fight the extremists. Behavior that appears to undermine the rule of law will undermine these efforts.

The fog of war is thick enough. It's time for Congress to acknowledge there is also a fog of law — and consider a legal framework for interrogation procedures.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., is a member of the Senate Armed Services and Judiciary committees and a colonel in the Air Force Reserve. Rep. Jane Harman of California is the ranking Democrat on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. This column first appeared in The Washington Post.

Mallard Fillmore

By BRUCE TINSLEY



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YOUR MONEY

Adjust maintenance for wintertime habits

Dear Tom and Ray:
The owner's manual for my 2004 Pontiac Vibe lists two maintenance schedules. The long-trip plan calls for the engine oil and filter to be changed every 7,500 miles (or 12 months), while the short-trip maintenance schedule sets a 3,000-mile interval for the service. Although my car meets all the requirements for the long-trip oil-change interval, the dealership where I take it strongly recommends the short-trip schedule in the winter, because according to the service manual, the winters in Maine cause oil to break down more quickly, and this can lead to engine damage if the oil is not changed every 3,000 miles. Is the dealership just looking for more business, or is it correct?

Click and Clack

Tom and Ray Magliozzi

—Wayne
TOM: Yes, and yes. Of course it's looking for more business. But harsh winter conditions can be harder on your oil.

RAY: Most manufacturers now recommend a 5,000-mile oil-change interval for what they call "normal" service. That's the way most people use their cars — including you, Wayne.

TOM: Then they have what's usually called an "extreme duty" or "hard service" interval of 3,000 miles for people who make their money the hard way. These are folks who use their cars as taxicabs, drive on dirt roads a lot or tow trailers frequently. Normally, spending a

winter in Maine is not considered extreme duty. Not for the car, anyway. For the oil, it would be.

RAY: But what tends to happen in the winter is that people drive places they usually don't drive. In the summer, you might walk 10 minutes to the store to pick up a quart of veggie peppermint patties. But when it's 2 degrees out with a 50 mph wind, and your thighs freeze together after your first 10 steps,

you'd probably decide to take the car. And when the car is used for lots of short trips in cold weather, the engine never really warms up entirely.

TOM: Until an engine warms up and reaches full operating temperature, it doesn't burn its fuel efficiently. That means there's unburned gasoline in the cylinders. Some of that gasoline makes its way past the piston rings and into the crankcase, where it mixes with the oil. That mixture makes for a lousy lubricant.

RAY: So, it's not the winter temperatures themselves that damage the oil, it's the type of driving people tend to do in the winter.

TOM: If you make a lot of short trips like that in the winter, then it might make sense to change the oil a little more frequently. We recommend 5,000-mile intervals to all but the most extreme drivers.

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the car advice site cars.com or writing to: Click and Clack, c/o The Hearst Corporation, 1700 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10014. Distributed by King Features Syndicate Inc.

Separate bank accounts

BY SUE SHELLENBARGER

The Wall Street Journal

Mary Glenn recently changed her name when she got married. Although she and her husband share nearly everything and are raising two kids together, there's one thing Glenn will never give up: her own checking account.

Glenn splits the household expenses with her husband but keeps a separate account for her own autonomy, security and peace of mind. "It's so freeing to be your own person, and not feel like someone is looking over your shoulder," says the Coleyville, Texas, software executive.

For better or worse, setups like Glenn's are increasingly common. Bucking traditional notions about the marital union, research suggests nearly half of married couples now keep separate bank accounts. A survey of 1,200 households by the Radson Financial Group, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., a research and marketing concern, showed 48 percent of married couples have two or more checking accounts, up from 39 percent in 2001.

One reason seems to be a growing distrust between men and women on money matters. Another, deeper change is under way: too a cultural trend toward more independent banking behavior among men and women alike, says Tony Ward-Smith, a consultant to credit unions.

The increase in two-income households, the high divorce rate and couples' tendency to marry at older ages are among the reasons for growth in separate accounts, Ward-Smith says. Also, more couples are part of stepfamilies with multiple sources of financial responsibility, including child support or alimony.

Many couples' lives are too complex for a joint account. Jean Low, a Logan, Utah, college professor, says she and her husband had trouble sharing a checkbook because she carried it with her, and he sometimes forgot to record expenditures, causing tension and overdrafts. Separate accounts solved the problem, she says. Years later, "we are still happily married and using the same system."

Even couples who pool funds are taking self-protective steps.

Jenn Lynch, a Portland, Ore., product manager, believes that "nothing says trust and partnership like joint credit cards and a single joint checking account." However, she and her husband, Bill, exchanged credit reports before pooling their assets, "to make sure there was nothing funny on there," she says.

A growing number of financial advisers are recommending that couples keep three accounts — a joint one for household bills, and separate ones for personal needs. For a joint account, most couples pony up a percentage of household expenses equal to their share of household income, if the wife makes \$40,000 and the husband \$60,000, she would pay 40 percent of joint expenses.

Over time, many couples decide separate accounts are a hassle.

Frank Pittman, an Atlanta psychiatrist and author, says he counseled one couple who were so busy allocating expenses between their separate accounts that they were "constantly preoccupied with small amounts of money. They were losing all the pleasure in life." He advised them to stop nickel-and-dime each other, pool their assets and try deciding jointly how to have some fun.

WEDNESDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES

	52-week High	52-week Low	Name	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD % Chg	52-week High	52-week Low
	10,888.07	9,708.40	Dow Jones Industrials	10,872.79	+62.59	+0.59	-1.01	9,708.40	7,916.40
	3,823.96	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,611.74	+71.59	+2.02	+0.91	+258.00	2,743.46
	358.20	259.08	Dow Jones Utilities	345.38	+2.47	+0.72	+3.11	+26.00	259.08
	1,731.79	6,211.33	NYSE Composite	1,743.28	+12.11	+0.70	+0.99	+65.00	6,211.33
	1,636.25	1,074.74	NYSE Composite	1,636.25	+0.00	+0.00	+0.00	+0.00	1,074.74
	2,191.60	1,750.82	NASDAQ Composite	2,201.25	+3.33	+0.05	-0.63	+1.42	1,750.82
	1,217.90	1,060.72	S&P 500	1,210.80	+6.64	+0.56	-1.74	+4.00	1,060.72
	1,688.48	548.29	S&P MidCap	624.54	+3.63	+0.59	+3.17	+10.11	548.29
	1,611.51	515.90	S&P SmallCap	624.54	+2.61	+0.42	-4.76	+7.17	515.90
	12,024.10	9,533.57	DLBX:NYSE:SP500	11,363.30	+66.80	+0.59	+0.42	+7.17	9,533.57

Man gunned down

CA SACRAMENTO — A 22-year-old man was gunned down in broad daylight while sitting in his car at a busy intersection Sunday in what a sheriff's spokesman called an "execution."

Sacramento County sheriff's investigators are looking for possible links to several recent gang-related shootings, Sgt. R.L. Davis said. Authorities said two men got out of a silver 1997 Toyota Camry, went around a bus filled with 16 children from a church and fired up to 18 rounds into Pra Vang's car.

Witnesses told authorities the assailants, described as Asian men wearing red and black clothing, fled in the Toyota, which was carrying two other passengers.

Vang died at the scene, Davis said. No one else was injured, and no other vehicle was hit, Davis said.

Coffee Pot dilemma

PA BEDFORD — The owners of a coffeepot-shaped luncheonette are hoping someone perks up and figures out a new use for the historic structure.

About a 18 months ago, a former owner donated the 1927-era Kookoo Coffee Pot to the Bedford County Fair Board. The board moved the notable building to the front entrance of its fairgrounds and spent thousands of dollars to renovate it.

But now, the board isn't sure what to do with it.

"We're just letting it be known that if people have suggestions, we're open to them," said board president John Holbert.

Until 2003, the Coffee Pot sat on U.S. Route 30 — one of America's first highways, also known as the Lincoln Highway. Bert Koonz, a local businessman, built the structure as a novelty luncheonette designed to draw customers to the service station next door.

Some have suggested using it for a hot dog stand, a retail shop or an art gallery.

Olga Herbert, the director of the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor, thinks the Coffee Pot would be a great place to sell coffee cups and coffee beans.

Fleet converting fuel

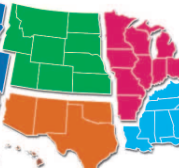
IN CHATTANOOGA — All diesel vehicles in the city-owned fleet will begin using biodiesel next week in an effort to improve air quality. Regular diesel fuel is mixed with animal fats and vegetable oils to produce biodiesel. State officials already agreed to reduce interstate highway speed limits in Hamilton County to lessen pollutants from diesel engines.

Pella opening new plant

IL MACOMB — Pella Corp., an Iowa-based window and door maker, said it will build a manufacturing plant in Macomb, creating 480 jobs. Up to \$7 million in state grants and tax incentives will help launch the 275,000-square-foot factory that's scheduled to open in March 2006. Pella will produce a new line of historic-looking windows at the plant.

Student guilty of murder

TX EDINBURG — A 17-year-old has pleaded guilty to stabbing to death a fellow



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

student as they waited for their parents to pick them up from an after-hours school event last March.

Jason C. Gonzalez pleaded guilty Tuesday to stabbing 15-year-old Lianna Nicole Olmeda 15 times outside Pharr-San Juan-Alamo North High School after a drama competition on March 29, 2004.

Gonzalez was to stand trial for Olmeda's death, but because of his guilty plea, a jury will determine Gonzalez's punishment. The jury will hear testimony from police officers, teachers, witnesses and family members.

Gonzalez is being tried as a minor because he was 16 at the time of the murder.

Prosecuting Assistant District Attorney Juan Villegas asked jurors to give Gonzalez the maximum of 40 years in prison.

Defense attorney Eddy Trevino told jurors Gonzalez suffered mental problems since age 12, including attention deficit hyperactive disorder and depression. After the slaying, Gonzalez was diagnosed with Aspergers syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism.

Shellfish harvest ban on

VA GLOUCESTER — A state ban on shellfish harvesting from six tributaries of the Severn River was set to begin Tuesday, following the discovery of high levels of bacteria from human or animal waste.

The state ordered the ban last

month for Whitaker, Free School and Sterling creeks, as well as their tributaries on the Severn's northwest branch. On the Severn's southwest branch, Willets Creek, Rows Creek, Holly Bush Creek and their tributaries were also made off-limits to shellfish harvesting.

Recent water samples from those tributaries showed excessive levels of fecal coliform, and eating shellfish from the waterways could lead to illness, state officials said.

Commercial fishermen don't work on those tributaries. But Tim Fearington, field director of the Virginia Division of Shellfish Sanitation's Norfolk office, said homeowners on the affected waterways had been advised not to harvest and eat shellfish.

Some people might have piers or docks in the creeks and use traps to grow oysters, he said.

The condemnations follow a Division of Shellfish Sanitation survey of 906 properties in the Severn watershed from February 2004 to April 2005 that identified 62 potential sources of pollutants.

The sources include livestock with direct access to creeks and ditches, homeowners with septic systems leaking effluent and washing machines that drain directly onto the ground or into ditches.

Bill would ban trap

RI PROVIDENCE — Legislation has been introduced that would ban a type of animal trap in Rhode Island.

Currently, the leghold, steel-jawed trap can be used in the state, with a permit from the state Department of Environmental Management. The animal rights group Defenders of Animals wants to ban the traps, saying they maim pets and other animals, and could be dangerous to small children.

Similar traps have been banned in 30 countries, according to the group.

The bill was introduced by Rep. Joseph Trillo, of Warwick, on Defenders of Animals' behalf.

No BO in the library!

CA SANTA BARBARA — County officials say people with body odor aren't welcome as library users. That means people who smell bad, including many homeless, can be denied service. Library Director Brian Reynolds said librarians will use their discretion.

Bill benefits vets

WY CHEYENNE — Gov. Dave Freudenthal signed a bill that will make it easier for veterans to obtain an \$800 break on their property taxes. The previous law contained a list of wars and had to be updated after each conflict involving the U.S. military. The new law streamlines the process so that veterans are automatically eligible.

Officials using blogs

MN MINNEAPOLIS — Some elected and appointed officials are using Web logs to keep their constituents in the loop. The bloggers' topics range from redevelopment efforts to where a city manager was going on a winter getaway. Scott Neill, Edina's city manager, says it's a way to reduce the disconnect between local government and its citizens.



Out for a swing

Ten-year-old Allie Billiot plays on a tire swing in Bayou Black, La.



Big man in the yard

Nick Sainato, of Morris Township, N.J., straightens out the nose on a large snowman. Sainato and three friends built the 15-foot-plus snowman on Sainato's front yard.



Careful, they'll all want some

Alvin Spanke, 10, feeds a bird on Detroit's Belle Isle during a visit to the park with his grandparents.



Happy schnauzer

While walking his two miniature schnauzers along the north shore of Flathead Lake, Dave Handy watches one of the canines playfully leap into the air in Somers, Mont.



Bad collision

Wayne County, Ind., sheriff's deputies investigate a fatal crash between a car and train near Hagerstown. The driver of the car, according to eyewitness reports, went around the crossing gates and was pushed several hundred feet.



Small, but still in front

Andrew Orbin leads bigger farm tractors down old U.S. 231 on their way to McCutcheon High School near Lafayette, Ind. The students from McCutcheon drove their tractors to the school for National FFA Week.

Museum may get boost

SC CHARLESTON — A long-delayed black history museum could get a much-needed boost this week if the City Council approves spending \$250,000 to launch a national fund-raising campaign. The museum was first suggested by Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. five years ago. The original \$37 million price tag has increased to an estimated \$50 million, organizers say.

Court cashes in

PA PHILADELPHIA — A 3-year-old program that allows police to impound the cars of traffic scofflaws has helped turn a once financially strapped court into a cash cow.

President Judge Francis E. Kelly of the Philadelphia Traffic Court said not enough money was coming in to cover the court's expenses in 1990, with \$56 million owed and more than 174,000 arrest warrants unserved.

Last year, the court collected \$23.1 million, nearly five times its \$4.8 million budget. Court officials expect to collect even more money this year.

Law enforcement efforts were beefed up, but authorities credit 2002's Live Stop program for much of the turnaround. Under the program, police are allowed to seize cars stopped for traffic violations if the vehicle is unregistered or uninsured, or if the driver is not properly licensed.

The program has resulted in the impounding of 75,000 vehicles. Last year, 27,000 vehicles were seized and nearly 15,000 released after the owners settled their outstanding tickets.

About 45 percent of the fines collected at the court go to the city, 55 percent to the state.

Nickel bingo now OK

OR KLAMATH FALLS — The folks who play bingo at the Klamath Basin Senior Citizen Center are no longer outlaws.

Five months ago, the Department of Justice contacted officials at the senior center after getting a complaint that bingo games were being played for cash.

Nickels, to be exact.

The senior center has a gambling license for the higher-stakes bingo program. But the Golden Age Club, which has about 200 members, is separate from the senior center and has never had a gaming license for its nickel-bingo operation.

The Klamath County Board of Commissioners last week amended the county's social gaming ordinance to include bingo, to the relief of the seniors who learned they've been playing an illegal game for the last two decades.

"Have fun with your bingo without the bureaucracy," Commissioner Bill Brown told an audience of about 20 seniors who came to support changing the rule.

Students clean up

MI ANN ARBOR — Some University of Michigan students are cleaning up — in more ways than one.

They're getting cash payments

for keeping their dormitory rooms presentable and available for tours by prospective students and their parents.

Eighteen students in nine residence halls are participating in the Michigan Campus Day tour program, according to Randi Johnson, the university's housing outreach coordinator.

The rules for Campus Day participants technically do not require a clean room. Participants do, however, have to be dressed and out of bed if they are home, and must let tour groups see their room from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Displays of anything illegal, offensive or banned — like hot plates — are forbidden.

Sophomores Aaron Benick and Eric Roman are receiving \$100 each this semester to participate.

Their room impressed Clark Iverson, 44, of Royal Oak, who was on the Friday tour with his 18-year-old son, Geoffrey, a high school senior who has been admitted to Michigan.

"It's cleaner than a 15-year-old's room," Clark Iverson said.

Banks hit by forgers

NC HIGH POINT — A group of forgers who bilked two High Point banks out of nearly \$125,000 on one day last month is suspected in similar schemes that cost area banks more than \$250,000 since December. Police say surveillance footage showed as many as 40 to 50 people cashed counterfeit payroll checks doctored to resemble those from a local business. The scenario has been reported in recent months at three banks in Thomasville and Davidson County.

Developer settles debts

RI PROVIDENCE — The developer who wants to buy the Westin Hotel in Providence will pay \$6.5 million to the state to settle debts left from the 1990s banking crisis. The deal with James Proccacciani was approved by a state committee. Both sides said the settlement is unrelated to the Proccacciani Group's \$95.5 million high bid for the Westin.

County goes after city

MI DETROIT — Wayne County officials want Hamtramck to refund nearly \$4 million in overpayments, a burden the struggling city says it can't afford. The county says it overpaid Hamtramck for 15 years as part of an agreement that compensates the city for revenue lost in connection with the county jail. The error was discovered after the county's longtime accounting director retired.

Trust land package sinks

AZ PHOENIX — Efforts to hammer out a package of state trust land changes to benefit education funding, preservation of open space and planned development have foundered at the Legislature, officials said. Arizona has 9.3 million acres of trust land, awarded by the federal government at statehood. It must be used to benefit public schools and institutions.

Stories and photos from the services

AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first scoreboard page in the sports section or AFRT's Web site at <http://tinyurl.com/afarts>

THRU: FEBRUARY 25, 2005

	(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)	
9:00	Slither: Worms at Work	Movie: "Molotov" (2001) Sissy Spacek. A molotov is charged with her patient's death.	Dr. Phil	Jocerguy Headline News	Nightline Headline News	College Basketball: Arizona State at Washington; (Taped)	30 Minute Meals Easy Entertaining-Charlene	Jocerguy Headline News	
9:30	Sagwa-Sameen Cat						Decorating Cents	ESPNews	
10:00	Arthur (E)		(8:46) Oprah Winfrey	ESPNews	Hardball With Chris Matthews		The Look for Less	Pacific Report	
10:30	Reading Rainbow (E)	(4:44) Movie *** "Suspect" (1987, Drama) Gene Dennis. David, Liam Neeson. A public defender becomes involved with an teenage lover.	(3:35) Guiding Light	The O.C. "The New Era"	The O'Reilly Factor	SportsCenter	ES News Live	The O.C. "The New Era"	
11:00	Shantay		(1:17) General Hospital	Headline News	Survivor: Palau	PrimeTime Thursday	The King of Queens	Survivor: Palau	
12:30	The Wiggles		Judge Judy	The Apprentice	Fox and Friends	College Basketball: Marquette at Cincinnati; (Taped)	That '70s Show	Charmed "Just Harried"	The Apprentice
13:00	Bob the Builder: Tennis court	Movie *** "Can't Hardly Wait" (2000, Comedy) Drew Davis. High-school seniors look to a wild graduation party.	Today: NBC Universal CEO Bob Wright discusses autism.	The Apprentice	Fox and Friends	SportsCenter	Strong Medicine "Second Opinion"	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
13:30	Jordan Rules (E)			Pacific Report	Fox and Friends	SportsCenter	Any Day Now "Home Girl"	Let's Show David Letterman	
14:00	Blue's Clues: Skunk's sad			The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	American Morning	College Basketball: Gonzaga at Portland; (Taped)	Third Watch "Unfinished Business"	The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson	
14:30	Barney & Friends (E)	(2:55) Movie *** "Mumford" (1999) Loren Dean, Hugh Jacks. Patients' lives to a psychologist with take care.	Teacher's Pet (E)	Headline News	Dennis Miller	FOX News	Motorcycle Racing: THQ AMA World Supercross: Grand Prix	The Simpsons	
15:00	Funnies Home Videos			Headline News	Countdown With Keith Olsen	PrimeTime Thursday	College Gamematch	American Idol	
15:30	Full House: "Tough Love"			Headline News	Entertainment Studios.com	FOX News	PGA Golf WGC Accenture Match Play Championship: Third Day From La Costa Resort & Spa in Carlsbad, Calif. (Same-day Taped)	Stephen King's Kingdom Hospital: Spectra focuses haun the halls of a hospital built on the site of a mill fire.	
16:00	Poison: "Show Way Out"			Headline News	Good Morning America	Studio 8 With Shepard Smith	Boston Children's Hospital: Spectra focuses haun the halls of a hospital built on the site of a mill fire.	Good Morning America	
16:30	Yo-Yo (E) (Part 2 of 3)			Headline News	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	Oobi	Daily Show-Jon Stewart	Oobi	
17:00	Doug (E)			Headline News	Let's Show-Letterman	Let's Show-Letterman		Clifford's Puggy Days (E)	
17:30	The Wild Thornberrys			Headline News					
18:00	The Fairly OddParents			Headline News					
18:30	Rugrats: First haircut.			Headline News					
19:00	Ally Grown Up			Headline News					
19:30	Dave the Barbarian			Headline News					
20:00	Danny Phantom			Headline News					
20:30	Drake & Josh	(3:45) Movie *** "The Family Man" (2000, Comedy-Drama) Nicolas Cage, Tea Leoni. A man gets a glimpse of the life that could have been his.	The Apprentice	Headline News	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	Oobi	Daily Show-Jon Stewart	Oobi	
21:00	That's So Roman			Headline News	Let's Show-Letterman	Let's Show-Letterman		Clifford's Puggy Days (E)	
21:30	Phil of the Future: "Phil in 21"			Headline News					
22:00	Switched			Headline News					
22:30	Radio Free Roscoe			Headline News					
23:00	The Cosby Show	Movie *** "The Fast" (1986, Suspense) Robert De Niro.	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	
23:30	Home Improvement			Headline News					
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2005									
00:00	Doug (E)	(11:00) Movie *** "The Fast" (1986) Robert De Niro.	Late Show-Letterman	All Grown Up	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	All Grown Up	
00:30	Rocket Power		Access Hollywood	Powerpuff Girls!	NBC Nightly News		American Idol	Dave the Barbarian	
1:00	The Fairly OddParents	(3:58) Movie *** "A Soldier's Story" (1984, Drama) Howard E. Rollins, Jr. Access Caesar, Denzel Washington.	4 Gtms	Danny Phantom	The NBC News Tonight		Danny Phantom	Danny Phantom	
1:30	Yo-Yo (E) (Part 3 of 3)			Drake & Josh	CBS Evening News	NBA Shootaround	Stephen King's Kingdom Hospital: Spectra focuses haun the halls of a hospital built on the site of a mill fire.	NBC Nightly News	
2:00	Ally Grown Up			The Mummy "Howl"	The Newsworld With Jim Lehrer	NBA Basketball: Cleveland Cavaliers at Indiana Pacers. From Consco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. (Live)	Boston Public "Chapter Forty Seven"	That's So Roman	
2:30	Dave the Barbarian			Degrassi: Next	Hannity & Colmes	Headline News	Stephen King's Kingdom Hospital: Spectra focuses haun the halls of a hospital built on the site of a mill fire.	Radio Free Roscoe	
3:00	Danny Phantom			Boxing Friday Night Fights - Jimmy Flyze vs. Terry Smith. (Live)	NBC Nightly News	NBA Basketball: Minnesota Timberwolves at Seattle Sea- tles. From the KeyStone in Seattle. (Live)	Stephen King's Kingdom Hospital: Spectra focuses haun the halls of a hospital built on the site of a mill fire.	NBC Nightly News	
3:30	Drake & Josh			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
4:00	That's So Roman			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
4:30	Phil of the Future: "Phil in 21"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
5:00	Sesame Street (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
5:30	Yo-Yo (E) (Part 3 of 3)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
6:00	Barney & Friends (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
6:30	Blue's Clues: "Let's Boogie!"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
7:00	Planet's Funniest Animals			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
7:30	Amazing Animal Videos			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
8:00	Lilo & Stitch: "Stushy"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
8:30	Team's Supremacy (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
9:00	Winx Club (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
9:30	Winx Club (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
10:00	Tenage Titans: "Afterhook"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
10:30	Tenage Titans: "Afterhook"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
11:00	Tenage Titans: "Afterhook"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
11:30	Justice League (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
12:00	Teen Kids News (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
12:30	Cyberchase (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
13:00	Trading Space: Boy-Girl			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
13:30	Planet's Funniest Animals			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
14:00	Wild America			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
15:00	The Most Extreme "Oddies"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
16:00	Hercules: The Enforcer			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
16:30	Journeys: The Enforcer			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
17:00	Doug: "Bebe Goes Broke"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
17:30	The Wild Thornberrys			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
18:00	The Fairly OddParents			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
18:30	Rugrats: First bite			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
19:00	Movie *** "Hercules: The Enforcer"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
19:30	Movie *** "Hercules: The Enforcer"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
20:00	Movie *** "Hercules: The Enforcer"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
20:30	Movie *** "Hercules: The Enforcer"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
21:00	Movie *** "Hercules: The Enforcer"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
21:30	Movie *** "Hercules: The Enforcer"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
22:00	American Idol			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
22:30	American Idol			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
23:00	American Idol			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	
23:30	American Idol			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	NBC Nightly News	

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2005

00:00	Doug (E)	(11:00) Movie *** "The Fast" (1996) Robert De Niro.	Let's Show-Letterman	Headline News	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Ally Grown Up
00:30	Rocky Power		Access Hollywood	Powerpuff Girls!	NBC Nightly News		American Idol	Dave the Barbarian
1:00	The Fairly OddParents	(3:58) Movie *** "A Soldier's Story" (1984, Drama) Howard E. Pollin Jr., Adolph Caesar. Dend Washington.	4 Ours	Danny Phantom	ABC World News Tonight			Danny Phantom
1:30	Rugrats			Drake & Josh	CBS Evening News	NBA Shootaround		Drake & Josh
2:00	Ally Grown Up			The Mummy "Howl"	The Newshour With Jim Lehrer	NBA Basketball: Cleveland Cavaliers at Indiana Pacers. From Consoco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. (Live)	Boston Public "Chapter Forty Seven"	That's So Roman
2:30	Dave the Barbarian			Degrassi: Next	Hannity & Coimes	Headline News	Stephen King's "Kingdom of Spores"	Switched
3:00	Danny Phantom	Movie *** "Men in Black II" (2000, Action) Will Smith, Will Smith.	Boxing Friday Night Fights - Formally Felt vs. Terry Smith - (Live)	Radio Free Roscoe	Nightly Business Report	NBA Basketball: Detroit Pistons at Los Angeles Lakers. From Staples Center in Los Angeles. (Live)	Breathingspace Yoga	Radio Free Roscoe
3:30	Drake & Josh			Headline News	Larry King Live		Caribbean Workout	Headline News
4:00	That's So Roman			Headline News			Body Shaping	Headline News
4:30	Phil of the Future: "Phil in 21"			Headline News			Every Woman	Headline News
5:00	Sesame Street (E)			Headline News			Beautiful Homes-Estates	ESPNNews
5:30	Barney & Friends (E)			Headline News			Curb Appeal	WWE Raw
6:00	Barney & Friends (E)			Headline News			Landscapers' Challenge	NBC News
6:30	Planet's Funniest Animals			Headline News			Windward Waters	Navy/Marine Corps News
7:00	Planet's Amazing Animal Videos			Headline News			Clean House	Access Hollywood
7:30	Amazing Animal Videos			Headline News			BBQ With Bobby Flay	Headline News
8:00	Static Shock "Party Rap"			Headline News			S40-Day	ESPNNews
8:30	Winx Club (E)			Headline News			Jackie Collins Presents	Headline News
9:00	Tween Titans "Afterstock"			Headline News			101 Most Unforgettable SNL Moments	Headline News
9:30	Nene Maui Ninja Turf			Headline News			Law & Order "The Dead Wives Club"	Headline News
10:00	Dragonball Z "Curtain Call"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
10:30	Justice League			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
11:00	Heen Kids News (E)			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
11:30	CyberSpace			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
12:00	The Early OddParents			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
12:30	Indiana Space Boy-Girl			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
13:00	Scout's Safari (E)			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
13:30	Planet's Funniest Animals			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
14:00	Wild America			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
14:30	The Most Extreme "Oddies"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
15:00	The Most Extreme "Oddies"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
15:30	The Most Extreme "Oddies"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
16:00	Hercules: The Legendary Journeys "The Enforcer"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
16:30	Doug "Bebe Goes Broke"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
17:00	Doug "Bebe Goes Broke"			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
17:30	The Wild Thornberrys			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
18:00	The Fairly OddParents			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
18:30	Rugrats First bike			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
19:00	Movie *** "Hey Arnold! The Movie" (2002, Comedy) Bruce Miller. A train-crash survivor discovers an extraordinary talent.			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
19:30	Movie *** "102 Dalmatians" (2000, Adventure) Glenn Close, Joan Griffo, Alice Evans.			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
20:00	Movie *** "102 Dalmatians" (2000, Adventure) Glenn Close, Joan Griffo, Alice Evans.			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
20:30	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
21:00	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
21:30	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
22:00	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
22:30	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
23:00	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live
23:30	American Idol			Headline News			The Blues "Plano Blues" Clint	Saturday Night Live

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FACES

New Academy members deal with first-time voting jitters

BY BETH HARRIS
The Associated Press

K with David popped in a DVD of "Vera Drake" and settled into the comfort of his pillow-strewn brown sofa. The veteran actor had decisions to make — lots of them — that would affect careers and coffers alike. David is a new member of one of the world's most exclusive voting blocs, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He's deciding for the very first time who gets to go home with an Oscar on Sunday.

"My vote counts," he said. "It's like I'm the Electoral College."

David, animator Brad Bird, actress Scarlett Johansson and costume designer David C. Robinson were among 127 people invited to join the 5,808-member academy last year.

"It's really nice to be able to feel like you have some part of who is recognized," said Johansson, 20, one of the youngest voters. "Maybe I should've done a bet with somebody to see if my picks win."

Watching 35 movies — plus 10 short subjects and 10 documentaries — and listening to five CDs of nominated songs in barely three weeks would be nirvana to most film fans.

But it's been a race to the deadline — a very firm deadline that passed at 5 p.m. Tuesday — for many academy members, most of whom have jobs and families to attend to each day. David, for instance, had to cram two or three movies in after midnight one recent evening.

Bird's also felt the squeeze. "I feel a real rush, almost a panic, to see them all," he says, "so I'm voting from a place of knowledge and not just because I know someone on a film or I like someone on a film."

Sometimes, the movies meld into a confusing blur.

Bird nominated this year for original screenplay and animated feature for "The Incredibles," recently attended the academy's nominees luncheon and met best-actress contender Annette Bening. He told her he loved her in "Finding Julia."

"Oops! Bird had confused 'Being Julia' with best-picture nominee 'Finding Neverland.'"

"I immediately corrected myself," he said. "I've seen so many in so little time."

Bird took his screeners — the first tapes and DVDs of the nominees — with him everywhere and watched at least one a day.

During idle moments, he even resorted to seeing some on his computer.

Animated feature and original screenplay were Bird's easiest votes — for himself.



At his home in Los Angeles, first-time Oscar voter Keith David watches actress Imelda Staunton's performance in "Vera Drake," which earned her an Academy Award nomination for best actress. He was racing to view all the films nominated before the ballot deadline Tuesday.

"I feel like I did a good job," he said modestly.

Robinson, the New York-based costume designer, watched three movies a day. If

he wasn't voting, he acknowledged he probably would have skipped "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events" and "Hotel Rwanda."

"It's not brain surgery. It's the performances and movies and visual things that grab you and make you feel something."

"It's not brain surgery. It's the performances and movies and visual things that grab you and make you feel something. I'm going to pick the things that do that."

David Robinson
Costume designer
Academy Award voter

So, did any of his first-timers vote for pals or someone who helped them get a job?

"If I felt two movies were equally good and I liked one person more than another, it would

push it over," Bird admitted. "But in the end, you're voting on the work."

Some Academy members, including Johansson, simply don't have the time to review all 24 categories, so they abstain from voting in contests they haven't seen.

"You want to be able to really give a fair judgment," said the busy actress.

Others skip the more technical categories, professing ignorance about the nuances of crafts such as sound mixing, sound editing, visual effects and cinematography.

But not David, a Tony- and Emmy-nominated actor whose credits include "There's Something About Mary," "Head of State" and "Barbershop."

"It's my opinion," he said. "Even if I don't know enough

about it, when I look at the movie, I look at that aspect. I know how a good editor can save ... a bad director."

After watching "Vera Drake" on his 36-inch television, David scribbled down notes detailing what he liked about the illegal abortion drama starring best-actress nominee Imelda Staunton.

"Tom doesn't begin to describe it," he said. "A lot of them get the same mark, so I go back and narrow it down. The few movies that I'm very hot on, I go back and watch them again. I'd hate to compare actors unless you saw them all play the same role."

Bird will be in the Kodak Theatre audience on Oscar night and Johansson will be a presenter. David and Robinson, meanwhile, will have to watch the fruits of their labors on TV because there's not enough room at the Kodak for every academy member.

But that hasn't dimmed David's regard for Hollywood's highest honor.

"I'm very glad they changed the language to 'The Oscar goes to,' instead of 'The winner is,'" David said. "There are no losers here."

Prince gets NAACP kudos

Prince may be a man of many names, but the NAACP likes his image regardless.

The "Purple Rain" singer will be honored with the 2005 NAACP Vanguard Award in a Los Angeles ceremony. The presentation will take place during the 36th annual NAACP Image Awards ceremony on March 19, which will be broadcast March 25 on Fox television.

"During the '80s, Prince emerged as the musical prophet of the era, releasing a series of albums that both define and captured the spirit of the times," the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People said in a statement. "His genre-bending songs sent shock waves through the music industry that still reverberate today."

The award is given to those who have worked to increase understanding and awareness of racial and social issues. The previous honorees are film director Steven Spielberg and movie producer Stanley Kramer.

Earlier this month, Prince won two Grammy Awards — for best male R&B vocal performance for "Call My Name," a single from his most recent album, "Musicology," and best traditional R&B vocal performance for "Musicology."



Prince

First 'Idol' to tour solo

Kelly Clarkson is hitting the road on her first solo headline tour.

Clarkson, winner of the first "American Idol" competition, will open "The Breakaway Tour" March 30 in Tulsa, Okla. The tour will end in Vancouver, British Columbia, May 29.

"Nothing makes me happier than being on the road," the 22-year-old singer said in a statement Tuesday. "I can't wait to see the fans and perform my new material."

Clarkson will perform in mostly theater-size venues, which she says "will be a great opportunity for me to connect with my hard fans in an intimate setting."

Other stops on the 34-city tour include New York, Los Angeles and Chicago.



Clarkson

Film too hot for Taiwan

Director Tsai Ming-liang says he won't release his award-winning film "The Wayward Cloud" in his native Taiwan if the island's censors insist on cutting any of its sexually explicit scenes.

The film won a Silver Bear from the Berlin International Film Festival Saturday for outstanding artistic contribution. The movie stars Lee Kang-sheng, who plays a porn film actor caught between his longtime on-screen partner and his girlfriend.

The movie includes oral sex, nudity and other sexually explicit scenes.

Tsai said he sought to use the film to explore the bewildering subject of the human body.

"It will not be shown unless in its totality," Tsai told TV reporters.

Stories and photos from wire services

Horoscope

In spite of best intentions, it quickly becomes apparent that what will be will be — you are not entirely in charge. The restless energy that takes over is perfect for drifting on the waves of imagination and going where the tides tug. The moon enters Libra tonight, and what occurs after that will make the whole day seem worthwhile.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (February 25). You're alive with the spirit of learning. Mental expansion also makes you oh-so-attractive to just the people you love to be around. Make sure to put plenty of fun into your schedule this spring, or you'll be too resentful to make the most of a June opportunity. The practicalities of love are solved in April, paving the way for a dreamy connection.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There are people to meet, places to go and things to buy. If you put your attention on the people and places, it will seem less important to purchase the extra trappings to prove you were there.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've played love's game, and now, your romantic prospect is exactly where you want him or her. As Dorothy Parker once said, "...and if that makes you happy, kid, you'll be the first it ever did."

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Life's juicy offerings go to the patient one. Once you arrive in a social setting, plan to stay as long as possible. If you loiter around long enough, the whole world will drift in and out.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your inner wild child comes to the fore. You may feel possessive when others howl at the moon. Your feral heart acts out in a way that no one else should be able to duplicate, crowd or stop.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You get what you aim for, so aim high. You might be surprised at what you

actually stop yourself from accepting because down deep you still don't need to change your self-concept.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There's a fanciful twist in the plot of your love life — how delicious. Don't spend your energy telling everyone. Keep romantic secrets. Also, while chasing after fame or notoriety, you could actually make some money.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Restlessness sets in — you sense that other people in the world are having much more fun than you. In this state, daily chores can seem lethal. If you can blow off responsibility and be spontaneous, you're cured.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There's so much creative energy at your disposal! But in order to keep producing, you must keep exposing yourself to new influences. Educate yourself. It's thrilling work.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The theme is compassion. Having more of it requires an effort, but you won't be sorry you tried. See a problem from at least three points of view before you make a judgment. A loving Aquarius helps.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your train of thought has definitely left the station. Now that you're on your way with this new project and your brain is humming with what to do next and next and next, you are extremely attractive to new romantic prospects.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Good news invigorates you and just when you need it the most! It's also stimulating to be around people who are riding out a wave of success. Say "yes" to the invitation tonight, but do put boundaries in place.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Take care of your body. Your mind and your relationships run beautifully when you feel good. It's a fine time to stop worrying about that family member who continues to march to a different drum.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes

Jump Start

Zits

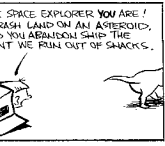
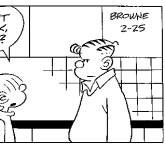
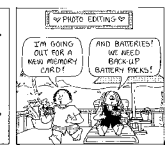
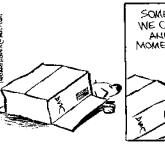
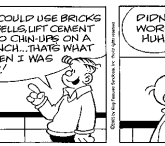
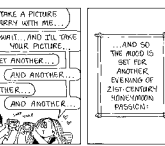
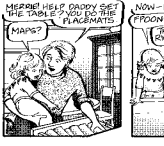
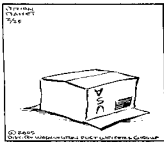
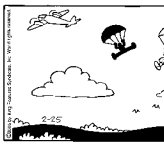
Cathy

Hi and Lois

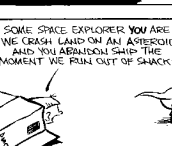
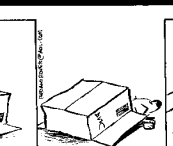
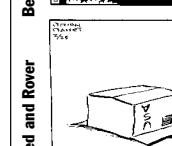
Beetle Bailey

Red and Rover

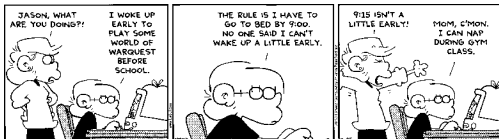
Better or Worse



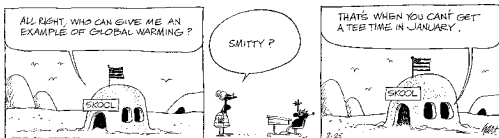
Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



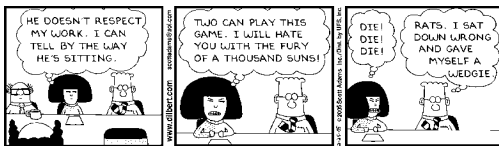
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



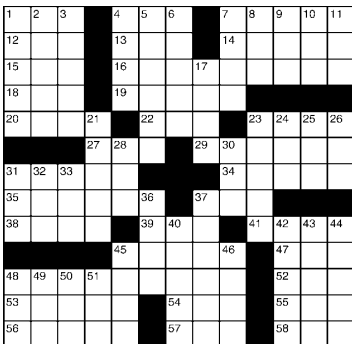
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Cheerleaders' call
- 4 Height of fashion?
- 7 Tonto's horse
- 12 401(k) alternative
- 13 "Huzzah!" to Jose
- 14 "Stormy Weather" singer
- 15 Part of MPH
- 16 Pantomime clown
- 18 Conclusion
- 19 De-squeaked
- 20 Shafts of light
- 22 Artists' S source
- 23 Splicing material
- 27 Hasten
- 29 Section of Manhattan
- 31 Cause (havoc)
- 34 Sluggish creek
- 35 Paul Newman movie
- 37 Has potential
- 38 Shrek is one
- 39 "Surfin' —"
- 41 "Pygmalion" playwright
- 45 Enormous
- 47 "Hail, Caesar!"
- 48 August
- 52 Staff
- 53 Executive bellyache
- 54 Past
- 55 Glutton
- 56 Flavorless
- 57 Actor Beatty
- 58 Rhythming tribute

Down

- 1 More mature
- 2 Sports venue
- 3 Half a legendary comedy duo
- 4 That's a laugh
- 5 "Seinfeld" role
- 6 Actress Oberon
- 7 Lean-to
- 8 — au vin
- 9 Tulsa sch.
- 10 One (Pref.)
- 11 1992 Pearl Jam album
- 17 Kevin's "King of Queens" co-star
- 21 Form
- 23 "Anatomy"
- 24 Nevada town
- 25 Ultramodernist
- 26 Flightless bird
- 28 Mami's man
- 30 "The — Daba Honeyymoon"
- 31 Personal question?
- 32 Scott Joplin's music
- 33 Mess up
- 36 Destroy
- 37 Horsemanship
- 40 "The Dragons of Eden" writer
- 42 Silent-movie star?
- 43 Duck
- 44 Sand-trap club
- 45 Surround
- 46 Trampled (on)
- 48 Nave
- 49 Every last crumb
- 50 GE merger co.
- 51 Stein or Affleck

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-25

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals T

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Autos for Sale - Germany 142

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Villanova adds BC to list of ranked upset victims

By DAN GELSTON
The Associated Press

VILLANOVA, Pa. — With big wins over ranked teams and a winning season that has them streaking up the Big East standings, the Villanova Wildcats seem poised to return to the NCAA tournament.

Still, coach Jay Wright is not resting easily.

"We really don't talk about that," Wright said. "We're very concerned about our regular season. It's so subjective. We go for our own goals."

Check beating the No. 2 and 3 teams in the country off the list.

Randy Foy scored 23 points and the 23rd-ranked Wildcats won their ninth nine-minute stretch without a field goal to beat No. 3 Boston College 76-70 on Wednesday night.

The enthusiastic fans stormed the court just as they have for two other home wins over Top 25 teams, chanting "Tournament!" and shook hands with Wright.

The Wildcats (18-6, 8-5 Big East) beat their fourth Top 25 team of the year, including a win over then-No. 2 Kansas last month, and bolstered their chances of making their first NCAA tournament appearance since 1999.

Villanova has won nine of 11 and moved into a three-way tie for fourth place in the Pittsburgh and Georgetown in the conference standings. Boston College remained in first place, only one game ahead of Connecticut.

"We were confident we could come in and play well, but we're still not thinking about the NCAA's," said Curtis Sumpter, who played with a sore knee and scored 18 of his 20 points in the first half.

Craig Smith led a second-half rally for Boston College (22-2, 11-2) and finished with 18 points, while Jared Dudley had 15.

The Wildcats, coming off a win over then-No. 17 Pittsburgh on Sunday, used 70

percent three-point shooting in the first half to take a halftime lead they stretched to 13 points early in the second half. When Jason Fraser made a layup at the 13:15 mark, the Wildcats led 57-47 and seemed in control.

The Eagles — who rallied from halftime deficits to win eight times this season — started their run while Villanova went into a field-goal drought.

Steve Hattery capped a 12-2 spurt with a three-pointer that pulled the Eagles to 62-60 with 6:23 left.

Foy banked a 6-footer for a 67-64 lead, ending the drought. The Wildcats never led the lead thanks to 8-for-10 free-throw shooting during that span.

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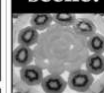
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Devils stifle Jackets' momentum

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Even with B.J. Elder back, Georgia Tech can't seem to generate momentum to make a run for an NCAA tournament bid.

Elder made his second straight start after missing nine games at the start of the Atlantic Coast Conference schedule with a hamstring injury, but the senior who normally provides scoring leadership for the Yellow Jackets was held to two points in a 60-56 loss to No. 7 Duke on Wednesday night.

Tech was 0-for-5 from three-point range, committed 19 turnovers and shot 29 percent from the field in the second half, wasting a strong defensive effort.

"I think the turnovers are putting some pressure on us," Georgia Tech coach Paul Hewitt said.

The first half, in particular, was a game of breakouts, and I thought if we could convert those, mentally and psychologically we could get into the flow a little bit. And then you're not squeezing the shot like it's the one."

The struggles have left Tech without consecutive wins since early January.

Hewitt said Duke (20-4, 10-4 Atlantic Coast Conference) looks like it will be a seed in the NCAA tournament. One year after advancing to the NCAA championship game, Tech (15-9, 6-7) is not even assured of a bid.

Tech, which now faces road games at Miami and Wake Forest before closing its conference schedule at home against Clemson, needs an offensive lift to boost its postseason outlook.

"We're not really in a panic mode, to be just one this game Saturday at Miami is going to be a big one for us," Elder said.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said Tech's breakthrough is inevitable.

"They were this close to winning tonight," Krzyzewski said, holding his fingers less than an inch apart. "They're too good and are too well-coached and they are good kids. It'll happen. I'm just happy that it didn't happen again to us."

Krzyzewski said Elder "is one of the best players in the country" but is not yet in game shape.

Elder, who was 1-for-8 from the field, played just 4 minutes in the first half after picking up two fouls. Junior Lee Melchioni delivered two late three-pointers to lift Duke.

With Tech focusing its defense on J.J. Redick, Melchioni snapped a 49-49 tie with a three-pointer from the top of the key with 3:15 left. He added another three with 1:26 left for a 57-52 lead.

With Duke leading 57-54, Melchioni missed a shot from the top of the circle as the shot clock expired, but Daniel Ewing grabbed the rebound for the Blue Devils and was fouled with 31 seconds left.

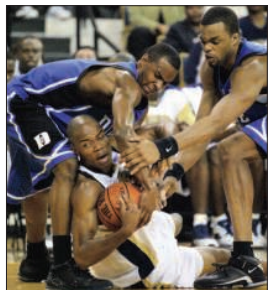
"That was probably as important a play as there was in the basketball game," Krzyzewski said.

Ewing missed two free throws, but the second was rebounded by Duke's Shelden Williams, again preventing Tech from taking possession.

A free throw by DeMarcus Nelson pushed Duke's lead to four before a pair of three-pointers by Schenker cut the lead to 56 with 11 seconds left.

Mario West was called for a foul on the inbound play, and Redick, who led Duke with 21 points, made two free throws to push the lead back to four.

No. 1 Illinois 84, Northwestern 48: Deshaun scored 18 of his 20 points on three-pointers to lead the Illini (28-0, 14-0), who clinched at least a share of the Big Ten title for the second straight season.



Georgia Tech's Jarrett Jack, center, battles Duke's Daniel Ewing, left, and Shelden Williams for a loose ball in the second half on Wednesday.

Brown had five threes in the first half as Illinois took a 45-22 lead. It was Illinois' 24th straight Big Ten win, and 20th in a row at Assembly Hall.

No. 5 Kentucky 81, Auburn 73: Keleena Azubike had career highs of 30 points and 11 rebounds for the Wildcats (21-3, 12-1 Southeastern Conference), who clinched at least a share of the East Division title for the sixth straight season.

Freshman Tony Douglas had 21 points, all in the second half, for the visiting Tigers (12-14, 3-10).

No. 6 Wake Forest 88, Longwood 47: Taron Downey scored 13 points as the Demon Deacons (23-4) cruised to the nonconference home win.

Michael Jefferson scored 14 points for the Lancers (1-29), who extended their school-record losing streak to 18 games in their first full season of Division I competition.

No. 15 Syracuse 83, St. John's 69: Hakim Warrick had a career-high 35 points and grabbed 10 rebounds — his 12th double-double of the season — and the Orange (23-5, 10-4 Big East) broke a two-game losing streak to give coach Jim Boeheim his 69th win.

Darryl Hill had a career-high 33 points for the Red Storm (9-15, 3-11), who lost their 20th straight road game.

West Virginia 70, No. 18 Pittsburgh 66: Kevin Pittsnogle scored 20 of his 22 points in the second half and the visiting Mountaineers (17-8, 7-7 Big East) rallied from 14 points down to sweep the season series and win for the fifth time in six games overall.

Chauncey Troutman had 15 points for the Panthers (18-6, 8-5), who didn't have a field goal in the final 12:26 in losing their second straight.

No. 21 Charlotte 80, Memphis 77: At Charlotte, N.C., Eddie Basden scored 24 points, including two free throws with 18 seconds to play, and the 48ers (20-4, 11-2) won their sixth straight and moved into a tie with Louisville for first place in Conference USA.

Robinson, Mashburn dealt away

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Philadelphia 76ers completed their second trade in two days, sending forward Glenn Robinson to the New Orleans Hornets for Jamal Mashburn and Rodney Rogers on Thursday.

Both Robinson and Mashburn have yet to play for their teams this year. Mashburn has a knee injury and might never play again.

Robinson, earning more than \$12 million in the final year of his contract, is on the injured list with left ankle tendinitis, though he's been unhappy since losing his starting forward spot in training camp.

"We knew what we wanted to do if we were going to move him," Sixers president Billy King said. "If this deal with Rodney didn't come about, we were not going to do a deal just to be moving Glenn."

Rogers can become a free agent at the end of the year. His three-point shooting fits nicely with coach Jim O'Brien's offensive philosophy, but Rogers is only averaging 9.3 points and shooting just 27.5 percent from three-point range.

Rogers played for O'Brien in Boston. Mashburn is making \$9.3 million this year and \$10.1 million next year, but seems likely to retire because of his knee injury. He hasn't played since last March and won't play for the Sixers, King said.

The Sixers dramatically re-



The Philadelphia 76ers traded forward Glenn Robinson to the New Orleans Hornets Thursday.

shaped their roster late Wednesday night, acquiring five-time All-Star Chris Webber from Sacramento as part of a six-player deal.

Cavs get Welsh from Celtics
CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Cavaliers addressed their need for a dependable outside shooter Thursday by acquiring guard Jiri Welsh from the Boston Celtics for a 2007 first-round draft pick.

Welsh, who started 32 games for Boston this season, should help the Cavaliers improve their woeful three-point shooting. After going 1-for-7 on three-pointers in Wednesday night's win over Chicago, the Cavaliers are ranked 27th out of 30 teams in the NBA from beyond the three-point line. Welsh has made 10 of 29 three-point attempts this season. He's averaging 7.5 points and 2.5 rebounds in 20.5 minutes per game. Cleveland has been interested in Welsh for several weeks.

The club considered trading the No. 10 overall pick in last year's draft for him. Instead, they used the selection on rookie Luke Jackson, out for the season after back surgery.

Trade: Iverson, 76ers finally get help inside

TRADE, FROM BACK PAGE

"If there's anything we need, it's definitely a big man," he said Monday. "A big man who helps us a lot, especially a big man that can rebound and block shots."

Webber, the No. 1 overall pick in 1993 following a stellar career at Michigan, has played exceptionally well for the Kings in recent weeks, averaging 21.3 points, 9.7 rebounds and 5.5 assists per game — though he isn't the athlete he was before knee surgery.

Williamson, a first-round draft pick by the Kings in 1995, played five years in Sacramento before being traded to Toronto for Doug Christie following the 1999-00 season. The NBA's top sixth man in 2001-02 with the Pistons, Williamson is averaging 10.8 points and 3.7 rebounds this season.

Thomas, an undersized power forward with a reliable jumper, fell out of favor with coach Jim O'Brien this season, while Skinner was a free-agent bust.

Barnes, a Sacramento native, has been a seldom-used reserve for the Kings this season, though he took Stojakovic's spot in the starting lineup recently. Bradley was acquired earlier in the season in Sacramento's deal for Mobley, but hasn't played much.

Petrie had never made a significant in-season trade before this season, but made two in recent weeks: The Kings acquired Cuttino Mobley from Orlando for Christie last month, beginning his most radical reshaping of Sacramento's roster since 1999.

Stojakovic, Bibby and injured guard Bobby Jackson are the only remaining Kings who were with the team in the 2003 playoff-offs. "I think we can still have a very good basketball team the remainder of the season," Petrie said. "It's going to be a challenge with the amount of change we've made now, because I'm trying to blend in even more new faces with 29 games to go. I have a lot of confidence in our remaining nucleus."

Spurs finally solve Rockets

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Tracy McGrady could only watch this time while Tony Parker led the San Antonio Spurs to victory.

Parker made three inside baskets, including a rare dunk off his own steal, during a decisive 14-3 run in the fourth quarter of a 99-81 win over the Houston Rockets on Wednesday night.

Parker went 6-for-7 in the second half and finished with the 22 points, but Spurs coach Gregg Popovich only wanted to talk about his defense.

"On defense, he sealed the game for us," Popovich said. "Nobody notices it, they just notice what people do offensively, but on defense, he was very, very good."

Parker had a season-high five steals.

In the first Spurs-Rockets matchup in early December, McGrady scored 35 points while scoring 13 points in the final 35 seconds to lead Houston to a one-point win.

In the second Rockets triumph, McGrady hit a three-pointer with 35 seconds remaining to end the Spurs' comeback hopes.

But on Wednesday, the last of his team-high 22 points came on a layup with five minutes left to bring the Rockets within three at 79-76. He took only one more shot, missing a three-pointer with 1:10 left. McGrady said, "I think I'm being too passive." Said McGrady, who shot only 7-for-21. "I'm trying to stay in the offense and getting the other guys involved, that's how we've been winning. Sometimes it'll hurt us because I do need to be more effective."

The victory was the Spurs' first in three tries against Houston this season, and their 16th straight win at home. San Antonio is 24-1 at the ABC Center.

Tim Duncan scored 30 points, including his third three-pointer of the season, and had 11 rebounds for the Spurs. Manu Ginobili added 18 points.

Yao Ming had 20 points and Juan Howard 16 for the Rockets, who dropped their second in a row after winning eight straight before the All-Star break.

"We're struggling to score — I don't think we had a field goal off the bench tonight," said Houston coach Jeff Van Gundy, whose reserves went 0-for-11. "[The



Spurs) had another level. That's why they're the best team in the league."

Cavaliers 100, Bulls 91: At Cleveland, Zydrunas Ilgauskas and LeBron James scored 41 of Cleveland's 57 points in the second half.

Ilgauskas scored 33 points — 26 after halftime — and added eight rebounds and seven blocks, matching a career high. James finished with 27 points, 11 assists, six rebounds and five steals as the Cavaliers improved to 21-5 at home.

Wizards 93, Grizzlies 83: At Washington, Gilbert Arenas scored 30 points and Antawn Jamison added 27 to lead the Wizards.

Arenas had 10 rebounds and six assists as the Wizards ended a three-game losing streak and won their fifth in a row at home.

Bucks 100, Nets 81: Desmond Mason scored 15 points, and ZaZa Pachulia tied his career high with 14 points and grabbed 12 rebounds to lead host Milwaukee.

Michael Redd, who missed the last three games before the All-Star break because of a sprained index finger, scored 11 points as Milwaukee won for fifth time in seven games.

Vince Carter had 26 points and Jason Kidd added 11 points and seven assists for the Nets, who haven't beaten the Bucks at the Bradley Center in the regular season since a 108-90 victory on March 10, 2000.

SuperSonics 103, Hornets 85: Rashard Lewis made six three-pointers and scored 26 points as visiting Seattle beat New Orleans for the fourth straight time.

Lewis made eight of 11 shots from the field and six of eight three-pointers — a career high for the Hornets, capping the performance with a perfect night at the free throw line where he was 4-for-4.

Ray Allen scored 25 points for Seattle, including 5-for-11 from three-point range. Luke Ridnour had 14 points, Antonio Daniels 11, and Ronald Murray added 13.

Reggie Evans grabbed 14 rebounds.

Nuggets 107, Celtics 86: At Denver, the Nuggets made it seem like old times, running to a victory over Boston to give Doug Moe a win in his first game back on the bench as George Karl's new assistant.

Andre Miller scored 22 points, Carmelo Anthony had 19 and Kenyon Martin had 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Nuggets.

Seeking some help on the bench, Karl persuaded Moe, his old North Carolina buddy and the winningest coach in Nuggets history, to sit by him for the final 29 games of the season. Moe agreed and the Nuggets played a lot like they did when he was coaching them to 432 victories from 1980-90.

Suns 118, Clippers 101: Leandro Barbosa, playing in place of the injured Steve Nash, scored a season-high 22 points, helping the Suns hand the Los Angeles Clippers their eighth consecutive loss — all on the road.

The victory over the depleted Clippers gave the Suns a 42-13 record and assured them of a winning season with 27 games remaining.

The loss ended a disastrous nine-game road trip — the longest in the NBA this season — for the Clippers, whose only victory during the journey came in their opening game against Memphis.

Mavericks 101, Jazz 83: Dirk Nowitzki scored 16 of his 29 points in the second half and visited Dallas railrod after blowing a 15-point lead.

Josh Howard added 18 points and nine rebounds and Michael Finley scored 24 for the Mavericks, who won their fifth straight.

Lakers 86, Trail Blazers 83: At Portland, Ore., Kobe Bryant had 31 points and Los Angeles held off a second-half Portland rally.

Shaheed Abdul-Rahim missed a three-point attempt at the final buzzer, giving the Lakers their third straight win.

Warriors 101, Hawks 96: Jason Richardson scored 20 points, Derek Fisher added 20 and the Golden State sent Atlanta to its 17th straight road loss.

Troy Murphy had a season-high 20 rebounds for the Warriors after missing their final 10 games before the All-Star break with a broken left thumb.

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Sosa's powerful display wows Orioles

Slugger reports to camp; Red Sox put final touches on ring ceremony

The Associated Press

Sammy Sosa introduced himself to his new Baltimore teammates the best way he knew: with a home display.

Sosa slammed about two dozen baseballs far over the center-field wall during his first workout with the Orioles in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on Wednesday. Before he was done, nearly half the squad witnessed their drills to watch the show.

"Sammy, we're going to run out of balls!" joked outfielder Larry Bigbie, who watched in awe as one shot after another soared over the outfield behind the practice field.

The Chicago Cubs were relieved to get rid of Sosa after his troubled 2004 season, and the Orioles are delighted to have him.

During his stay in Chicago, Sosa battled with Mark McGwire in a memorable home run duel in 1998, went to the All-Star Game seven times and was the 1998 NL MVP. But he contends that the corked bat and his early departure from the ballpark ruined an otherwise wonderful relationship.

"For the 13 years I was in Chicago, I only made two mistakes. That's pretty good," he said. "If I had known that leaving early last year would have caused such a controversy, I would have never done it. My manager told me I had a day off. But what can I say?"

In Fort Myers, Fla., the Boston Red Sox learned they will get their World Series rings at their

home opener on April 11 before a sold-out Fenway Park crowd — and the New York Yankees.

"I'm sure I'm not going to help them hand them out," Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter said to laughter at New York's camp in Tampa.

"But they deserve it. I'm sure they've been looking forward to this for a long time. So let them do it."

Boston became the first major league team to overcome a 3-0 deficit in the playoffs, doing it against their biggest rival in the AL championship series last October. The Red Sox then swept St. Louis in the World Series.

"This is the kind of quality problem I hope we're going to be able



In Lakeland, Fla., Tigers reliever Uguetha Urbina spoke with reporters for the first time about the rescue of his kidnapped mother.



In his first workout with the Orioles, Sammy Sosa hit two dozen balls far over the center-field wall at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on Wednesday.

to have with some frequency," Red Sox President Larry Lucchino said, "sit around at spring training and decide just when, oh when, do we give out the World Series championship rings."

To accommodate fans who didn't get tickets to Opening Day, the rings will be displayed at a welcome-home dinner attended by players that same night and at a display on the Fenway Park field along with the World Series trophy and the ball Doug Mientkiewicz caught for the last out of the Series.

"Even though the fans are not getting it, they have to feel like they're receiving one because they all deserve it," David Ortiz said. "They supported us a lot through the years."

In Lakeland, Fla., Uguetha Urbina said he planned to report to spring training, even if his kidnapped mother still was being

held. He didn't want to show her captors that he was weak. Now that Maura Villarreal is safe following a rescue operation Friday, Urbina said an indescribable weight has been lifted from his shoulders.

"I feel like I'm 18 years old," the Detroit Tigers reliever said, speaking publicly about the ordeal for the first time.

Villarreal, 54, was rescued by Venezuelan police during an eight-hour raid that left two of her abductors dead, two captured and seven others as fugitives. Police described the kidnappers as Venezuelan and Colombian drug smugglers.

She was held for 5 months, 18 days in a camp that police called a drug-traffickers' hideout in Venezuela's southern mountains.

Urbina and his two brothers, Ulmer and Ulises, were at a loss. "There wasn't much we could

do. We'd never been in this situation, and we didn't know where she was," Urbina said. "Where can you go to try to find her? She could be anywhere. It's hard."

"It's not like the movies. It's real life."

In Winter Haven, Fla., Cleveland's Juan Gonzalez became the latest player to deny Jose Canseco's accusation of using steroids.

"It's not true ... I never saw

needles. I never saw pills. I never

saw anything ... The only guys

who have put needles in my body

are doctors," Gonzalez said.

In Kissimmee, Fla., Atlanta shortstop Rafael Furcal hustled off the field, ignoring several television crews that wanted to speak with him. At his locker a few minutes later, he responded tersely to an interview request: "Are you going to ask me about baseball?"

He spent 13 days in jail during the offseason and four weeks in the state prison center following his second conviction for drunken driving. The 26-year-old Furcal gave up alcohol after his latest arrest, but also said he doesn't believe he has a drinking problem.

"Just bad luck," he said.

In Scottsdale, Ariz., manager Felipe Alou said he thinks he'll probably be back with the San Francisco Giants for a fourth season in 2006.

His contract ends after this season and Alou turns 70 in May, but he has shown he still has enough energy to lead the Giants for 62 games. He also wants to manage his son, Moises, for another season.

In Bradenton, Fla., Pittsburgh's pitcher, catching prospect J.R. House underwent surgery to repair a torn labrum and torn rotator cuff in Birmingham, Ala., and he'll miss the entire season.

Temple's Chaney suspends himself for one game

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Temple basketball coach John Chaney suspended himself Wednesday for one game and apologized for putting a player in the against Saint Joseph's a day earlier for the sole purpose of rough play and quick fouls.

Chaney offered the self-imposed suspension after meeting with Temple President David Adamany and athletic director Bill Bradshaw. He will be replaced on the bench by assistant Dan Leibowitz for Saturday's game against Massachusetts.

"I would like to apologize to Saint Joseph's University, its fans, student-athletes and head coach Phil Martelli for my reprehensible behavior during Tuesday night's game," Chaney said in a statement. "I spoke with Coach Martelli today to voice my apology to him and his team."

Chaney said he was not surprised by reaction to Tuesday's home game.

"I'm either good or bad in some people's eyes," Chaney said in a brief telephone interview with The Associated Press on Wednesday. "There's no gray area. I apologized to the people that matter most."

Adamany also reacted to some Temple students spitting in the direction of Saint



John Chaney punished himself for putting in players solely to commit hard fouls during a loss to Saint Joseph's.

Joe's players and cheerleaders. He said the first few rows of the student section at the Liacouras Center would be empty for Saturday's game as a reminder they should uphold the standards of good sportsmanship.

Upset by what he thought were illegal screens by Saint Joseph's that were not being called, Chaney turned to seldom-used 6-foot-8, 250-pound Nehemiah Ingram to "send a message."

Ingram started throwing his arms around and trussing elbows, once connecting hard to the chin of Hawks center Dwayne Jones, and had a hard foul on John Bryant that left him sprawled on the

court for several minutes.

Ingram fouled out in 4 minutes, his average playing time for a game this season.

Chaney said after the game he was going to send in a "goon."

"Ingram was not the only person I put in there," Chaney said Wednesday. "I put three or four players in there and were telling them to make hard fouls."

Chaney, called for a technical in the second half after bawling out players, said he never wanted his players to hurt anyone.

Injury ends Marquette star's season

MILWAUKEE — Travis Diener's college career is over thanks to a broken hand, leaving him 83 points short of surpassing George Thompson as Marquette's career leading scorer.

Diener, a Cousy Award finalist as the nation's top point guard, broke his left hand Tuesday and underwent surgery that night. Diener leads Conference USA with averages of 19.7 points and seven assists, and is the only player in the country to lead a major conference in both categories.

The Golden Eagles are 18-8, 6-7 in Conference USA.

NASCAR penalizes R. Gordon

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Robby Gordon Motorsports was fined \$50,000

Wednesday and docked 25 championship points, the most severe penalty for violations at Daytona International Speedway.

NASCAR fined crew chief Bob Temple and deducted points from car owner Jim Smith for an unapproved intake manifold on his Chevrolet on Feb. 11 during the initial Nextel Cup inspection for the season-opening Daytona 500.

Gordon, driver and part owner of the new team, failed to make the starting lineup for the Daytona 500 and has no points. Smith earned 31 points on qualifying results.

The Wood Brothers Racing team was assessed seven penalties because of an unapproved spoiler adjustment found on the Ford driven by Ricky Rudd. He was penalized 25 points, crew chief Michael McSwain was fined \$25,000 and crew member Marc Smith was suspended from NASCAR competition until March 31.

Hantuchova advances to Qatar semis

DOHA, Qatar — Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia beat veteran Conchita Martinez 6-4, 6-1 in a rain-interrupted quarterfinal of the Qatar Open on Thursday.

Top-seeded Amelie Mauresmo, second-seeded Maria Sharapova and No. 4 seed Alicia Molik were scheduled to play quarterfinal matches Thursday in the \$600,000 tournament.

Sports briefs

Ramstein boys reach semifinals

BY RUSTY BRYAN
Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — The Ramstein Royals were hoping the third time would be the charm when they squared off against cross-town rival Kaiserslautern in Thursday night's late semifinal game of the boys' European Division I basketball tournament.

The second-seeded Royals advanced after going 3-0 in pool play, setting up the game against Kaiserslautern, runner-up in the other bracket. K-town has beaten Ramstein on the court twice this season, although the Royals were awarded a victory for forfeiture when an ineligible player slipped through pregame checks for the second game.

"We're playing the best we have all year," said Ramstein coach Len Tarnowski after the Royals closed out the pool-play portion of the tournament Thursday morning with a 55-37 victory over sixth-seeded International School of Brussels. "We've been focused right off the bat so far."



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

London Central's Danny Melville drives past Sigonnella's Chris Cerame in a Division III in an opening-round tournament game on Thursday in Mannheim, Germany. London Central defeated Sigonnella 57-51.

Stephan James scored 13 points, Allen Weaver had 10, Whitney McCloud nine, and Brennan Relaford and Marquison Showers eight each against ISB. The Royals had earlier beaten Wiesbaden 53-47 and Lakenheath 52-31. Kaiserslautern finished 1-1 in its pool play, including a big win, 45-32, Wednesday against five-time defending champion Heidelberg.

"This is the third time we've played them. Let's hope we learned something," Tarnowski said.

The game was scheduled to tip off at 8 p.m., after this edition of Stars and Stripes went to press. Thursday's other semifinal pitted Würzburg against Wiesbaden.

Wiesbaden tops Lakenheath: Justin King scored 21 points Thursday morning, but it wasn't enough to keep the Lancers (1-2) from elimination from the Division I event.

Robert Edwards paced Wiesbaden (2-1) with 12 points as the Warriors finished second in their bracket and will play Würzburg (2-0), winner of the other bracket.

Hannu escapes Bittburg: Guard Malcolm Lane scored 20 points

and grabbed 12 rebounds, both game highs, to top-seeded Hannu defeated No. 7 Bittburg 50-48 in overtime Wednesday. Ivan James contributed six steals as Hannu rallied from nine points down in the fourth quarter to force the extra period.

Mannheim rallies past BFA: Jamal Womble scored 23 points as third-seeded Mannheim outscored No. 6 Black Forest Academy 17-11 over the game's final seven minutes to claim a 44-40 victory that left the Bison 2-0 at the end of Day 1 in the Division II event. BFA fell to 1-1.

Rota, Hohenfels get Div. III started: Third-seeded Rota downed Giessen 59-36 and Hohenfels edged Vicenza 60-59 Thursday as the Division III tournament got under way. Top-seeded Ansbach and second-seeded Bamberg will join the Division III bracket Friday when the tournament goes to an eight-team single-elimination format.

Brussels stays perfect in Division IV: Brussels edged Livorno 48-46 Thursday to improve its record in the boys Division IV event to 3-0.

E-mail Rusty Bryan at: bryanr@mail.strips.esd.mil

Ramstein, K-town girls to vie for title

BY RUSTY BRYAN
Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Neighboring rivals Ramstein and Kaiserslautern, who between them have won seven of the last eight girls' European Division I basketball crowns, will make it eight in nine Friday when they square off in the final.

Their semifinals Thursday couldn't have been more different. Ramstein rolled past defending champion Lakenheath 55-22, while top-seeded Kaiserslautern had to go to the line to defeat third-seeded Heidelberg 41-36.

Ramstein used a relentless defense to beat Lakenheath. "We said right before the game that defense would win the game for us," Ramstein's Krissy Grosslein said. "We played how we knew we could."

Grosslein had 28 points despite sitting out the fourth quarter. She scored eight points and made four assists off steals produced by double-teaming every Lakenheath player who made the mistake of picking up her dribble. The tactic produced 9-0 and 8-0 second-quarter runs for Ramstein, and a 32-14 halftime lead.

Lakenheath, which defeated Ramstein 59-57 in last year's title game, also was hampered by the absence of all-conference guard Meme Smith, declared ineligible for the tournament for undisclosed reasons. Megan Carridine led the Lancers with 13 points.

The game was a continuation of the defensive dominance Ramstein demonstrated in Wednesday's 37-33 pool-play victory over Kaiserslautern. Ramstein outscored K-town, which defeated the Lady Royals twice in January, 15-1 over the opening seven minutes and never looked back.

In its semifinal, Kaiserslautern made 27 of 36 free throws.

Bianca Gereña-Perez, a 60 percent free-throw shooter during the regular season, led the way, hitting nine of nine after missing her first try Thursday. She hit four straight in the first 2-46 of the fourth period after Heidelberg cut the deficit to 23-22.

Dupe Babatude led Kaiserslautern with 10 points, eight of them in the final period and six of those on nine free-throw attempts.

Play starts Naples: In a Division II pool-play game Wednesday night, Nicole Anderson sank



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

SHAPE's Devina Marquez, left, tries to stop Kasia Mangosing of Aviano in Division II action on Thursday in Heidelberg, Germany. Aviano won 36-29.

the winning free throw with less than 10 seconds to play as fifth-seeded Patch pinned the first defeat of the season on Naples 38-37.

No. 8 Milan dumps Iceland: Lauren Leisner made an 8-foot put-back basket with seven seconds to play Thursday, giving the eighth-seeded Panthers a 37-35 victory over fourth-seeded Iceland in the Division IV tourney.

The win, which came after Iceland's Candice Apling hit a three from the left wing with 35 seconds left to tie the game at 35, left Milan with a 2-1 pool-play record. Iceland fell to 1-2.

Rota, Hohenfels cruise: In the Division III tournament that began Thursday, third-seeded Rota crushed Bamberg 52-33, and No. 4 Hohenfels stopped the American Overseas School of Rome 42-27. Top-seeded Ansbach, the defending Division III champion, and second-seeded Sigonnella were idle Thursday, and will join the top six from Thursday's play in an eight-team, single-elimination bracket Friday.

Championships for Divisions I and IV are scheduled for Friday. Divisions II and III will play their finals on Saturday at Mannheim.

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European basketball championships scoreboard

MANNHEIM, Germany — Late first-day results Wednesday and early results Thursday from the European Divisions I, II, III and IV high school basketball tournaments which end Saturday (pool-play games are 7-minute quarters, semifinals and finals are 8-minute quarters):

Boys

Wednesday's late results

Division II
Aviano 67, Patch 51
Mannheim 44, Black Forest Academy 40
Hannu 56, Bittburg 48 (OT)
Division IV
Iceland 61, Alcorn 45
Ankara 41, Milan 15

Girls

Wednesday's late results

Division I
Heidelberg 38, Wiesbaden 27
Ramstein 37, Kaiserslautern 33
Division II
Vilcek 43, Bittburg 27
Patch 38, Naples 37
Hannu 52, Aviano 38
Mannheim 40, ANFNORTH 28

Division IV
Milan 45, Incirli 39
Brussels 30, Merwitt Hill 13
Lajes 30, Ankara 26

Thursday's games

Boys

Division I

Pool play
Wiesbaden 48, Lakenheath 42
Ramstein 55, International School of Brussels 37

Semifinals

Würzburg vs. Wiesbaden, late
Ramstein vs. Kaiserslautern, late

Division II

Mannheim 67, Patch 59
Hannu 52, Vilcek 42
Black Forest Academy 55, SHAPE 38
Naples 48, Bittburg 37
Aviano 53, Mannheim 40
Vilcek 45, ANFNORTH 31
Patch 39, SHAPE 46

Girls

Hannu vs. Naples, late
Bittburg vs. ANFNORTH, late
Aviano vs. BFA, late

Division III
Hohenfels 60, Vicenza 59
Rota 59, Giessen 36
London Central 60, Sigonnella 51

Division IV

Hohenfels 46, American Overseas School of Rome 33
Giessen 46, Marmyouth 30
Siponnella vs. Baumholder, late
Vicenza vs. ACOR, late
London Central vs. Baumholder, late

Division I

Brussels 48, Livorno 46
Ansbach 47, Ankara 40 (OT)
Alcornbach 44, Milan 17

Semifinals

Brussels vs. Alcornbach, late
Iceland vs. Merwitt Hill, late

Division II

Lakenheath 55, Patch 33
Ramstein 55, Lakenheath 33
Kaiserslautern 41, Heidelberg 36

Division III

Hannu 38, Bittburg 22

Mannheim 39, Patch 38 (OT)
Aviano 38, SHAPE 28
Naples 50, ANFNORTH 20
Giessen 40, Mannheim 38

Division IV

Hohenfels 46, American Overseas School of Rome 27
Baumholder 37, London Central 27
Vicenza 35, ACOR 11

Semifinals

Bamberg 51, Marmyouth 14
Hohenfels vs. Vicenza, late
Rota vs. Marmyouth, late
London Central vs. Vicenza, late

Division I

Alcornbach 51, Incirli 39
Brussels 38, Merwitt Hill 28
Lajes 19, Ankara 17

Semifinals

Alcornbach 60, Ankara 45
Brussels 38, Aviano 16

Enigmatic Moss headed to Oakland

Vikings will reportedly get LB Harris, No. 7 pick and late-round selection

By JON KRAWCZYNSKI

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Randy Moss' electrifying talent was no longer enough for the Minnesota Vikings to put up with his distracting antics.

Dante DiTrapano, Moss' agent, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the Vikings and the Oakland Raiders had "come to an agreement on Randy playing for Oakland next year."

Neither the Vikings nor the Raiders would confirm the deal, which was first reported by The St. Paul Pioneer Press.

"We have had discussions with the Oakland Raiders, but there's nothing to announce," Rob Berezinski, Minnesota's vice president of football operations, told The Associated Press.

Raiders spokesman Mike Taylor said, "I cannot comment on the deal specifically, however, this organization has always been tremendously aggressive and Randy Moss rates with the great players of all-time. Great players want to play for the Raiders."

DiTrapano said he didn't know the terms of the deal, but the Pioneer Press reported the Vikings would get linebacker Napoleon Harris, along with the seventh overall pick and a late-round pick in the upcoming draft. The deal cannot become official until March 2, the start of the NFL's fiscal year.

Moss is due to make \$7.25 million next year. Harris is due to make \$5.41 million.

Oakland's renegade owner Al Davis has long embraced combustible players and the vertical passing game, so adding Moss seems to be a perfect fit.

The timing of the move comes as a bit of a surprise with the Vikings in the midst of an ownership change. Red McCombs has agreed to sell the team to Arizona businessman Reggie Fowler, a deal that still needs to be approved by the NFL.

Trade rumors have surrounded the flamboyant Moss during the offseason.

He struggled with a hamstring injury, but had 13 touchdown catches last season. He was fined \$10,000 for pretending to pull down his pants and moon the Green Bay crowd during Minnesota's playoff win. He also drew criticism for leaving the field with 2 seconds left in a regular-season loss against Washington.

Team leaders Matt Birk and Daunte Culpepper confronted Moss after he walked off at Washington, and the organization's patience with the receiver seemed to dwindle in the past year or so.

"He's my good friend, but you almost get to thinking that maybe enough is enough," Culpepper said earlier this month at the Pro Bowl. "And maybe the Vikings organization has had enough."

Last year's transgressions were the latest in a long line of headline-grabbing negative behavior for Moss that included bumping a traffic control officer with his car in 2002, verbally abusing corporate sponsors on a team bus in 2001 and squinting an official with a water bottle in 1999. But when he was focused and healthy on the field, there was no denying his considerable ability.

His 9,142 receiving yards are the most by any player over his first seven seasons. The



AP

Despite averaging 82 catches, 1,306 yards and 12.9 TD receptions while missing only three games in seven NFL seasons, most fans remember Randy Moss for mooning fans in Green Bay this January.

Vikings' offensive identity was built around Moss' uncanny ability to leap over smaller defensive backs to catch deep passes.

But after the Vikings lost to Philadelphia in the playoffs this season, coach Mike Tice talked of molding the Minnesota into a running team.

Perhaps in a veiled reference to Moss, Tice also said the Vikings needed leaders to emerge.

"I've said many times before — until the leadership takes over the locker room, we're not going to make the big jump to where we need to be," Tice said in January. "The teams that are playing now — New England and Philadelphia — have tremendous leadership in their locker room. They take care of everything."

QB Bledsoe joins Dallas

The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Bill Parcells turned to another of his former quarterbacks in hopes of getting the Dallas Cowboys back into the playoffs.

Drew Bledsoe, 33, was reunited with the coach who made him the first overall pick

in the NFL Draft 12 years ago, signing a three-year contract Wednesday that will further push back the ascension of Drew Henson as the starter. The deal is worth about \$14 million, but much of that is packed into the final year. He received about a \$2 million signing bonus and will make about as much this season.

"I'm convinced that we were writing things off to have not had a veteran quarterback," Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said. "I'm not into, for our fans, almost to design having a season that's not competitive."

QB Fiedler released by Dolphins

MIAMI — The Miami Dolphins released quarterback Jay Fiedler on Wednesday, ending his five-year run as the maligned successor to Dan Marino.

Eagles tender RB Westbrook

PHILADELPHIA — The Eagles tendered restricted free agent Brian Westbrook on Wednesday, giving Philadelphia the right to match any offer he receives or a first-round pick from any team that signs him.

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SPORTS



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Kings move forward

Sacramento ships Webber to 76ers, gets little in return

By GREG BEACHAM
The Associated Press

Chris Webber finally left Sacramento — and for a whole lot less than a King's ransom.

Now, the Kings will find out whether they're really a better team without their cornerstone, and the Philadelphia 76ers will learn whether another superstar can thrive alongside Allen Iverson.

The Kings dealt Webber to the Sixers late Wednesday night in a six-player deal that dramatically reshaped both clubs on the eve of the trade deadline.

Philadelphia got Webber, one of the NBA's elite power forwards and a five-time All-Star, along with reserve forwards Matt Barnes and Michael Bradley. The Sixers gave up relatively little in return, sending veteran forwards Corliss Williamson, Kenny Thomas and Brian Skinner to the Kings.

Webber's departure from Sacramento has been discussed nearly since the moment Geoff Petrie acquired him from Washington before the 1999 season. The Kings' president of basketball operations rebuilt the small-market Kings around Webber, transforming the franchise from a perennial loser to a club with six straight winning seasons and two division titles.

"He has been an instrumental part of ushering in an era of basketball here in Sacramento that most of the world at that time did not believe could happen," Petrie said late Wednesday night.

"I don't think myself or anyone in this organization could thank him enough."

Petrie was typically vague about his reasons for the deal, citing only "flexibility and versatility," but Webber is due to make \$62 million over the next three seasons — and Petrie clearly is among the NBA observers who believe Sacramento's up-tempo passing offense will be even better without Webber in the middle.

Peja Stojakovic, Brad Miller and Mike Bibby all thrived last season while Webber recovered from knee surgery — but all three stars regressed when Webber returned. Though both Webber and Stojakovic denied rumors of a rift between Sacramento's stars, Stojakovic demanded a trade from the Kings last summer.



The Sacramento Kings traded forward Chris Webber (4) to the Philadelphia 76ers in a six-player deal on Wednesday. Philadelphia was seeking help for its star Allen Iverson before the NBA trade deadline.

And though Webber had the best years of his career in Sacramento, the forward with the megawatt smile and larger-than-life personality always longed for a bigger stage — even after the Kings re-signed him to a seven-year deal worth approximately \$127 million in 2001.

In Philadelphia, Webber will get the national attention he always craved — and Iverson will get some of the help he has always wanted.

"The message that we're sending is that we went out and got a player who's averaging 21 and 10 to go along with our young players," Sixers president Billy King said. "I think the way we play, it allows some of our younger guys to develop even more because you've got a big guy now that can really make passes and shoot the jump shot."

The 76ers host the Kings on Saturday, and Philadelphia will play in Sacramento on March 28.

The Sixers are 26-27 and just a

half-game behind Boston for first place in the Atlantic Division, while the Kings have the NBA's seventh-best record at 34-20 heading out on a six-game road trip, their longest of the season.

Iverson, the NBA's leading scorer, claimed he didn't ask to be traded if the Sixers didn't make any bold moves to contend in a weakened Eastern Conference this year — but the All-Star Game MVP believed the Sixers needed help to make a playoff push.

SEE TRADE ON PAGE 30



Vikings sending receiver Moss to Raiders

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Villanova topples fourth top 25 team of season with win over Boston College

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Ramstein girls, boys advance in European tournament

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